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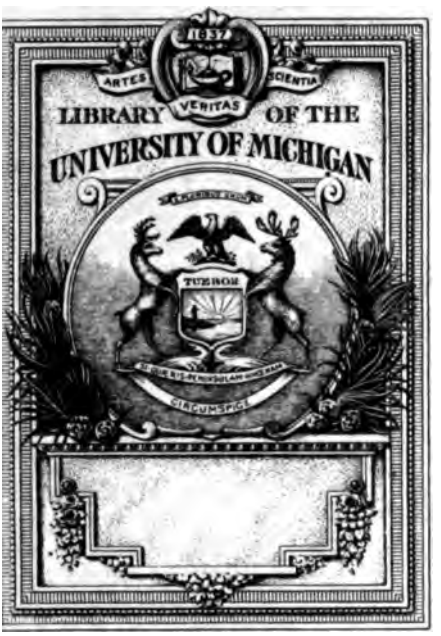
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# WORKS

OF

# JOHN DONNE, D.D.,

*DEAN OF SAINT PAUL'S,*

1621—1631.

## WITH A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

BY

HENRY ALFORD, M.A.,

*VICAR OF WYMESWOLD, LEICESTERSHIRE, AND LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.*

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IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XXXIX.

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# SERMONS

## PREACHED ON WHITSUNDAY.

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### SERMON XXX.

1 Corinthians xii. 3.

**Also no man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.**

We read[1] that in the tribe of Benjamin, which is, by interpretation, *Filius dextræ*, *The Son of the right hand*, there were seven hundred left-handed men, that could sling stones at a hair's breadth, and not fail. St. Paul was of that tribe; and though he were from the beginning, in the purpose of God, *Filius dextræ*, A man ordained to be a dexterous instrument of his glory, yet he was for a time a left-handed man, and took sinister ways, and in those ways, a good markman, a laborious and exquisite persecutor of God's church; and therefore it is, that Tertullian says of him, *Paulum mihi etiam Genesis olim repromisit*, I had a promise of Paul in Moses; then, when Moses said, *Jacob blessed Benjamin thus, Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf, in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil*[2], that is, at the beginning Paul shall scatter the flock of Christ, but at last he shall gather, and re-unite the nations to his service; as he had *breathed threatenings, and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*[3], so he became *Os orbi sufficiens*[4], A mouth loud enough for all the world to hear: and as he had drawn and sucked the blood of Christ's mystical body, the church, so, in that proportion that God enabled him to, he recompensed that damage, by effusion of

[1] Judges xx. 16. [2] Gen. xlix.
[3] Acts ix. 1. [4] Chrysostom.

his own blood, *He fulfilled the sufferings of Christ, in his* himself says, to the Colossians[5]; and then he bequeathed posterity these epistles, which are, as St. Augustine calls *Ubera ecclesiæ*, The paps, the breasts, the udders of the cl and which are, as that cluster of grapes of the land of Ca which was borne by two; for here, every couple, every pai have their load, Jew and Gentile, learned and ignorant, m wife, master and servant, father and children, prince and counsel and client, how distinct soever they think their c to be towards the world, yet here every pair must equally their necks to this sweet and easy yoke, of confessing Jesu the Lord, and acknowledging that confession to proceed fr working of the Holy Ghost, for *No man can say, that Jesu Lord, without the Holy Ghost.*

In which words, these shall be the three things, that consider now; first, the general impotency of man, in s duties, *nemo potest*, no man can do this, no man can do an secondly, how, and what those spiritual duties are expresse it is a profession of Jesus to be the Lord, to say it, to dec and thirdly, the means of repairing this natural impote rectifying this natural obliquity in man, that man by t Ghost may be enabled to do this spiritual duty, to prof cerely Jesus to be the Lord. In the first we shall see universality of this flood, the generality of our loss in *nemo*, none, not one, hath any, any power; which not blasphemy, that exempt any person from the infection and secondly, we shall see the impotency, the infirmity, w lies, it is *in homine*, no man; which notes their blasphem say, man may be saved by his natural faculties, as he is and thirdly, by just occasion of that word, *potest*, he can able, we shall see also the laziness of man, which, though do nothing effectually and primarily, yet he does not so m he might do; and in those three, we shall determine o part. In the second, what this spiritual duty, wherein we so impotent, is, it is first, an outward act, a profession; n an outward act is enough, but that the inward affection not enough neither; to think it, to believe it, is not enou

[5] Coloss. i. 14. [6] Numb. xiii. 24.

we must say it, profess it: and what? why, first, that Jesus is; not only assent to the history, and matter-of-fact, that Jesus was, and did all that is reported, and recorded of him, but that he is still that which he pretended to be; Cæsar is not Cæsar still, nor Alexander, Alexander; but Jesus is Jesus still, and shall be for ever. This we must profess, that he is; and then, that he is the Lord; he was not sent hither as the greatest of the prophets, nor as the greatest of the priests; his work consists not only in having preached to us, and instructed us, nor in having sacrificed himself, thereby to be an example to us, to walk in those ways after him; but he is Lord, he purchased a dominion, he bought us with his blood, he is Lord; and lastly, he is the Lord, not only the Lord paramount, the highest Lord, but the Lord, the only Lord, no other hath a lordship in our souls, no other hath any part in the saving of them, but he: and so far we must necessarily enlarge our second consideration. And in the third part, which is, that this cannot be done but by the Holy Ghost, we shall see, that in that *but*, is first implied an exclusion of all means but one; and therefore that one must necessarily be hard to be compassed, the knowledge and discerning of the Holy Ghost, is a difficult thing; and yet, as this *but* hath an exclusion of all means but one, so it hath an inclusion, an admission, an allowance of that one, it is a necessary duty; nothing can effect it, but the having of the Holy Ghost, and therefore the Holy Ghost may be had: and in those two points, the hardness of it, and the possibility of it, will our last consideration be employed.

For the first branch of the first part, The generality, that reaches to us all, and to us all over; to all our persons, and to all our faculties; *Perdidimus per peccatum, bonum possibilitatis*, says St. Augustine, We have lost our possession, and our possibility of recovering, by Adam's sin. Adam at his best had but a possibility of standing; we are fallen from that, and from all possibility of rising by any power derived from him: we have not only by this fall broke our arms, or our legs, but our necks; not ourselves, not any other man can raise us; everything hath in it, as physicians use to call it, *Naturale balsamum*, A natural balsamum, which, if any wound or hurt which that creature

hath received, be kept clean from extrinsic putrefaction, will heal of itself. We are so far from that natural balsamum, as that we have a natural poison in us, original sin: for that, original sin, (as it hath relation to God, as all sin is a violating of God) God being the God of mercy, and the God of life, because it deprives us of both those, of mercy, and of life, in opposition to mercy, it is called anger and wrath, (*We are all by nature the children of wrath*[7]) and in opposition to life, it is called death, *Death enters by sin, and death is gone over all men*[8]; and as original sin hath relation to our souls, it is called that indelible foulness, and uncleanness which God discovers in us all, (*Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord*[9]) and which every man finds in himself, as Job did, *If I wash myself in snow-water, and purge my hands never so clean, yet my own clothes shall make me filthy*[10]. As it hath relation to our bodies, so it is not only called *lex carnis*, a law which the flesh cannot disobey, and *lex in membris*, a law written and imprinted naturally in our bodies, and inseparably inherent there, but it is a law that hath got *posse comitatus*, all our strength, and munition into her own hands, all our powers, and faculties to execute her purposes against us, and (as the apostle expresses it fully) *Hath force in our members, to bring forth fruits unto death*[11].

Consider our original weakness, as God looks upon it, so it is inexcusable sin; consider it, as our souls suffer by it, so it is an indelible foulness; consider it as our bodies contribute to it, and harbour it, and retain it, and so it is an unquenchable fire, and a brand of hell itself; it hath banished me out of myself, *It is no more I that do anything, but sin that dwelleth in me:* it doth not only *dwell*, but *reign in these mortal bodies;* not only *reign*, but *tyrannise*, and *lead us captives under the law of sin, which is in our members*[12]. So that we have utterly lost *bonum possibilitatis*, for as men, we are out of all possibility, not only of that victorious, and triumphant gratulation and acclamation to ourselves, as for a delivery, *I thank God through Jesus Christ*[13], but we

[7] Ephes. ii. 3. [8] Rom. v. 12. [9] Jer. ii. 22. [10] Job ix.
[11] Rom. vii. 5. [12] Ver. 23. [13] Ver. ult.

cannot come to that sense of our misery, as to cry out in the apostle's words, immediately preceding, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

Now as this death hath invaded every part and faculty of man, understanding, and will, and all, (for though original sin seem to be contracted without our will, yet *Sicut omnium natura, ita omnium voluntates fuere originaliter in Adam*, says St. Augustine, As the whole nature of mankind, and so of every particular man, was in Adam, so also were the faculties, and so the will of every particular man in him) so this death hath invaded every particular man; death went over all men, forasmuch as all men had sinned. And therefore they that do blasphemously exempt some persons from sin, they set them not above the law, but without the law: they outlaw them, in taking from them the benefit of the new law, the Gospel, and of the author of that law, Christ Jesus, who came a physician to the sick, and was sent only to save sinners; for them that are none, it is well that they need no Redeemer, for if they did, they could have no part in ours, for he came only to redeem sinners, and they are none. God brought his Son out of Egypt, not out of Goshen in Egypt; not out of a privileged place in Egypt, but out of Egypt; God brought his Son Christ Jesus out of the Virgin Mary without sin, but he brought not her so, out of her mother. If they might be believed that the blessed Virgin, and John Baptist, and the prophet Jeremy were without all sin, they would go about at last to make us believe, that Ignatius were so too. For us, in the highest of our sanctification, still let us press with that, *Dimitte nobis debita nostra, O Lord forgive us our trespasses*, and confess that we needed forgiveness, even for the sins which we have not done; *Dimissa fateor, et quæ mea sponte feci, et quæ te duce, non feci*, says St. Augustine, I confess I need thy mercy, both for the sins which I have done, and for those, which if thy grace had not restrained me, I should have done. And therefore if another think he hath escaped those sins that I have committed, *non me derideat ab eo medico ægrum sanari, a quo ei præstitum ne ægrotaret;* let him not despise me, who am recovered, since it is the same physician who hath wrought upon us both, though by a diverse method, for he hath preserved him, and he hath recovered

me: for, for himself, we say still with the same father, *Perdiderat bonum possibilitatis*, As well he as I, had lost all possibility of standing, or rising after our fall.

This was our first branch, The universal impotency; and our second is, That this is *in homine*, in man, no man (as man) can make this profession, *That Jesus is the Lord:* and therefore we consider first, wherein, and how far man is disabled. In every age, some men have attributed to the power of nature, more than a natural man can do, and yet no man doth so much as a natural man might do. For the over-valuing of nature, and her power, there are impressions in the fathers themselves, which (whether misunderstood by the readers, or by the authors) have led and prevailed much. When Justin Martyr says, *Ratio pro fide Græcis et barbaris*, That rectified reason did the same office in the Gentiles, as faith did in the Christians; when Clement says, *Philosophia per sese justificavit Græcos*, That the Gentiles to whom the law and the Gospel was not communicated, were justified by their philosophy; when Chrysostom says, *Satis fuit Gentibus abstinuisse ab idololatria*, It was sufficient for the Gentiles, if they did not worship false gods, though they understood not the true; when St. Augustine says, *Recte facis, nihil quærere amplius, quam quod docet ratio*, He doth well that seeks no farther, than his reason leads them, these impressions in the fathers have transported later men farther; so far, as that Andradius in the Roman church, saves all honest philosophers, that lived morally well without Christ: and Tostatus takes all impediments out of their way, that original sin is absolutely remitted to them, *In prima bona operatione in charitate*, In their first good moral work that they do. So that they are in an easier way than we, who are but Christians; for in the opinion of Tostatus himself, and that whole church, we cannot be delivered from original sin, but by baptism; nothing less than a sacrament would deliver us from original sin, and any good work should deliver any of the Gentiles so disposed.

In all ages, in all churches, there have been men, who have been *ingrati gratiæ*, as St. Augustine calls them, that have been unthankful to the grace of God, and attributed that to nature which belonged to grace. But we have an universal conc

*God hath made of one blood all mankind*[14], and no man can adopt himself into the family of God; man is excluded, and all power in man, and all assistance from man; neither your own reason, nor the reason of your masters, whom you rely upon, can raise you to this knowledge: for, *Ægyptus homo, non deus, The Egyptians are men, and not gods, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit; and when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, the helper shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall, and they shall fall together*[15]. The atheist and all his philosophy, helper and he that is holpen, horse and man, nature and art, reason mounted and advanced upon learning, shall never be able to leap over, or break through this wall, no man, no natural man can do anything towards a supernatural work.

This was our second branch, That too much is ordinarily attributed by man to man, and our third is, That too little is done by any man, and that is worse than the other. When Nebuchadnezzar had made his image of gold of sixty cubits, it had been a madness in him, not to have celebrated the dedication thereof, with all the pomp, and solemnity that he did: to have gone so far, and not to have made it serve his farther uses, had been a strange impertinence. So is it a strange contemplation, to see a man set up a golden image, to attribute even a divinity to our nature, and to imagine it to be able to do, whatsoever the grace of God can do, and yet with this angelical nature, with this celestial soul, to contribute less to the glory of God, than an ant, or a plant, or a stone. As the counsel of the philosopher Epictetus directs thee, if thou take any new action in hand, consider what Socrates would do in that case; that is, dispose thyself therein, according to the example, and precedent of some wise man: so if thou wilt take this new action in hand, (that which is new, but should be ordinary unto thee) if thou wilt take a view of thy sins that are past, do but consider, if ever thou didst any sin, which Socrates, or Seneca would not have forborne. And whatsoever thou seest another can do, by the power of that reason, and that persuasion which thou art able to minister, who are not able to infuse faith, nor inspire grace into him, but must work by thy reason, and upon his reason, why shouldest thou not be as pow-

[14] Acts xvii. 26. [15] Isaiah xxxi. 3.

erful upon thyself, and as strong in thine own behalf, and obey that counsel from thyself, which thou thinkest another man mad, if he do not obey, when thou givest it? Why shouldest thou pretend reason, why another should forbear any particular sin, and not present that reason to thyself, or not obey it? To love the Scriptures of God better than any other book; to love the house of God better than any other court; to love the communion of saints better than any other conversation; to study to know the revealed will of God, rather than the secrets of any princes; to consider the direct purposes of God against his enemies, rather than the sinister supplantations of pretenders to places in court; briefly, to read, to hear, to believe the Bible, is a work within the ability of nature, within the power of a moral man.

He that attributes more to nature, he that allows her any ability of disposing herself beforehand, without prevention of grace, or concurrence and co-operation after, without continual assistance of particular graces, he sets up an idol, and magnifies nature beyond that which appertains unto her. But he that goes not so far as this, that the reason of man, and his natural faculties, are the instruments and organs that God works in by his grace, howsoever he may in discourse and in argument exalt nature, howsoever he may so give too much to her, yet he does not so much with her, as he might do: he hath made her a giant, and then, as though he were afraid of her, he runs away from her: he will not do that which is in his power, and yet he thinks it is in his power to repent when he lists, and when he lists to apply the merits of Christ to himself, and to do all those duties which are implied in our next part, *To say that Jesus is the Lord.*

In this, our first duty is an outward act, *dicere*, to profess Christ Jesus. *Non erubesco*, says St. Paul, *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, for it is the power of God unto salvation*[16]: and *Qui erubuerit*, says Christ, *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my word, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in glory*[17]. This is a necessary duty, but is it the duty of this place? for here it is not *non vult*, but *nc potest:* not that he is loath to profess Jesus, but that he is unable to do it. We see that some could say that, and say it alo

[16] Rom. i. 16. [17] Luke ix. 26.

preach it, and yet without the Holy Ghost; *Some* (says the apostle) *preach Christ through envy and strife, supposing to add more afflictions unto my bands*[18]. Which may well be, that some Jews and Gentiles, to exasperate the state against Paul, fained themselves also to be converted to his religion, because when they had made him odious by drawing off others, they who pretended to have been drawn by him, could always save themselves with recanting, and renouncing their new profession: so they could say *That Jesus was the Lord*, and never mean it. And of those twelve whom Christ chose to preach, Judas was one, of whom Christ says, *Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil*[19]? So that this devil Judas, and that devil that made him a devil, the devil himself, could say as much as this, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know*[20]; they said it, they cried it, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God*[21], and that incessantly, *Till Jesus rebuked them, and suffered them not to say, That they knew him to be the Christ.*

But besides that, even this confessing of Christ, is not *sine omni impulsu Spiritus Sancti*, altogether without any motion of the Holy Ghost, (for the Holy Ghost, even in these cases, had a purpose to draw testimonies for Christ, out of the mouths of his adversaries) this is not the professing required here; when Tiberius had a purpose to canonize Christ Jesus, and to admit him into the number of the Roman gods, and to make him beholden to him for that honour, he therefore proposed it to the senate, that so that honour, which Jesus should have, might be derived from him, and when the senate had an inclination of themselves to have done Christ that honour, but yet forbore it, because the intimation came not from themselves, but from the emperor, who still wrought and gained upon their privileges, neither of these, though they meant collaterally and obliquely to do Christ an honour, neither of them did say *Jesum dominum*, that is, profess Jesus, so as is intended here, for they had their own ends, and their own honours principally in contemplation.

There is at first an open profession of the tongue required; and therefore the Holy Ghost descended in fiery tongues, *Et lingua propria Spiritui Sancto*, says St. Gregory, The tongue is the

[18] Philem. 15. [19] John vi. 70. [20] Acts xix. 15. [21] Luke iv. 41.

fittest instrument for the Holy Ghost to work upon, and to work by, *Qui magnam habet cognationem cum Verbo*, says he, The Son of God is the Word, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from him, and because that faith that unites us to God, is expressed in the tongue, howsoever the heart be the centre in which the Holy Ghost rests, the tongue is the sphere, in which he moves; and therefore, says St. Cyril, As God set the cherubim with a fiery sword, to keep us out of Paradise, so he hath set the Holy Ghost in fiery tongues to let us in again. As long as John Baptist was unborn, Zachary was dumb; when he was born, Zachary spoke; Christ is not born in us, we are not regenerate in him, if we delight not to speak of his wondrous mercies, and infinite goodness to the sons of men; as soon as he is born in us, his Spirit speaks in us, and by us; in which, our first profession is *Jesum esse*, that Jesus is, that there is a Jesus.

This is to profess with Esay[22], That he is *Germen Jehovæ*, the Bud of the Lord, the blossom of God himself; for this profession is a two-edged sword; for it wounds the Arians on one side, that Jesus is Jehovah, (because that is the name that signifies the very essence of God) and then it wounds the Jews on the other side, because if Jesus be *germen Jehovæ*, the bud, the blossom, the offspring of God, then there is a plurality of Persons, Father and Son in the Godhead. So that it is a compendiary and summary abridgement, and catechism of all our religion, to profess that Jesus is, for that is a profession of his everlasting essence, that is, his Godhead. It hath been denied that he was such as he was pretended to be, that is, born of a Virgin; for the first heretics of all, Cerinthus, and Ebion, who occasioned St. John's Gospel, affirmed him to be a mere man, made by ordinary generation, between Joseph and Mary. It hath been denied, that he was such a man, as those heretics allowed him to be, for Apelles his heresy was, that he made himself a body out of the elements, as he came down from heaven, through them. It hath been denied that he had any body at all; Cerdon and Marcion, said, That he lived and died but in *phantasmate*, in appearance, and only in a form and shape of a body assumed; but, in truth, no body, that did live or die, but did only appear, and vanish. It hath been

[22] Isaiah iv. 2.

denied that that body which he had, though a true and a natural body, did suffer, for Basilides said, That when he was led to execution, and that on the way, the cross was laid upon Simon of Cyrene, Christ cast a mist before their eyes, by which they took Simon for him, and crucified Simon, Christ having withdrawn himself invisibly from them, as at other times he had done. It hath been denied, (though he had a true body, and suffered truly therein) that he hath any body now in heaven, or shall return with any, for he that said he made his body of the elements as he came down from heaven, says also that he resolved that body into those elements again, at his return. It hath been denied, that he was, that he is, that he shall be; but this profession, that Jesus is, includes all, for, he of whom that is always true, *est*, he is, he is eternal, and he that is eternal, is God: this is therefore a profession of the godhead of Christ Jesus.

Now, in the next, as we profess him to be *Dominus*, *a Lord*, we profess him to be God and man, we behold him as he is a mixed person, and so made fit to be the Messiah, the anointed High Priest, King of that church, which he hath purchased with his blood, and the anointed king of that kingdom which he hath conquered with his cross. As he is *germen Jehovæ*, the offspring of Jehovah, so he must necessarily be Jehovah; and that is the name, which is evermore translated, The Lord; so also as he is Jehovah, which is the fountain of all essence and of all being, so he is Lord, by his interest, and his concurrence, in our creation; it is a devout exercise of the soul, to consider how absolute a Lord he is, by this title of creation; if the king give a man a creation by a new title, the king before in that man, some virtuous and fit disposition, some preparation, some object, some subject of his favour. The king gives creations to men, whom the universities, or other societies had prepared; they created persons whom other lower schools had prepared; at lowest, he that deals upon him first, finds a man, begotten and prepared by parents, upon whom he may work. But remember thy Creator that called thee, when thou wast not, as though thou hadst been, and brought thee out of nothing; which is a condition (if we may call it a condition, to be nothing, not to be) farther removed from heaven, than hell itself: who is the Lord of life, and

breathed this life into thee, and swears by that eternal life, which he is, that he would have this life of thine immortal, *As I live saith the Lord, I would not the death of a sinner.*

This contemplation of Jesus, as a Lord, by creating us, is a devout, and an humble contemplation; but to contemplate him as Lord by redeeming us, and breeding us in a church, where that redemption is applied to us, this is a devout, and a glorious contemplation. As he is Lord over that which his Father gave him, (his Father gave him all power in heaven and in earth, and *omne judicium*, his Father put all judgment into his hands, all judiciary and all military power was his; he was Lord Judge, and Lord of Hosts) as he is Lord over his own purchase, *Quod acquisivit sanguine, That church which he purchased with his own blood*[23]: so he is more than the heretics of our time have made him, that he was but sent as a principal prophet to explain the law, and make that clear to us in a Gospel; or as a priest, to sacrifice himself, but not for a ransom, not for a satisfaction, but only for a lively example, thereby to incline us to suffer for God's glory, and for the edification of one another. If we call him *Dominum*, a Lord, we call him *Messiam, Unctum, Regem*, anointed with the oil of gladness by the Holy Ghost, to be a cheerful conqueror of the world, and the grave, and sin, and hell, and anointed in his own blood, to be a Lord in the administration of that church, which he hath so purchased. This is to say that Jesus is a Lord; to profess that he is a person so qualified, in his being composed of God and man, that he was able to give sufficient for the whole world, and did give it, and so is Lord of it.

When we say *Jesus est*, That Jesus is, there we confess his eternity, and therein, his Godhead: when we say *Jesus Dominus*, That he is a Lord, therein we confess a dominion which he hath purchased; and when we say *Jesum Dominum*, so, as that we profess him to be the Lord, then we confess a vigilancy, a superintendency, a residence, and a permanency of Christ, in his dominion, in his church, to the world's end. If he be the Lord, in his church, there is no other that rules with him, there is no other that rules for him. The temporal magistrate is not so lord, as that Christ and he are colleagues, or fellow-consuls, that

[23] Acts xx. 28.

if he command against Christ, he should be as soon obeyed as Christ; for a magistrate is a lord, and Christ is the Lord, a magistrate is a lord to us, but Christ is the Lord to him, and to us, and to all, none rules with him, none rules for him; Christ needs no vicar, he is no non-resident; he is nearer to all particular churches at God's right hand, than the bishop of Rome at his left. Direct lines, direct beams do always warm better, and produce their effects more powerfully, than oblique beams do; the influence of Christ Jesus directly from heaven upon the church, hath a truer operation, than the oblique and collateral reflections from Rome: Christ is not so far off, by being above the clouds, as the bishop of Rome is, by being beyond the hills. *Dicimus Dominum Jesum*, we say that Jesus is the Lord, and we refuse all power upon earth, that will be Lord with him, as though he needed a coadjutor, or Lord for him, as though he were absent from us.

To conclude this second part, *To say that Jesus is the Lord*, is to confess him to be God from everlasting, and to have been made man in the fulness of time, and to govern still that church, which he hath purchased with his blood, and that therefore he looks that we direct all our particular actions to his glory. For this voice, wherein thou sayest *Dominus Jesus*, *The Lord Jesus*, must be, as the voice of the seraphim in Esay[24], thrice repeated, *Sanctus*, *sanctus*, *sanctus*, *Holy*, *holy*, *holy;* our hearts must say it, and our tongue, and our hands too, or else we have not said it. For when a man will make Jesus his companion, and be sometimes with him, and sometimes with the world, and not direct all things principally towards him; when he will make Jesus his servant, that is, proceed in all things, upon the strength of his outward profession, upon the colour, and pretence, and advantage of religion, and devotion, would this man be thought to have said *Jesum Dominum*, *That Jesus is the Lord? Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I speak to you*[25]? says Christ; Christ places a tongue in the hands; actions speak; and *Omni tuba clarior per opera demonstratio*, says St. Chrysostom, There is not only a tongue, but a trumpet, in every good work. When Christ sees a disposition in his hearers, to do according unto their

[24] Isaiah vi. 2. [25] Luke vi. 46.

professing, then only he gives allowance to that that they say, *Dicitis me Dominum, et bene dicitis*[26], You call me Lord, and you do well in doing so, do ye therefore, as I have done to you. To call him Lord, is to contemplate his kingdom of power, to feel his kingdom of grace, to wish his kingdom of glory. It is not a *Domine usque quo*, Lord how long before the consummation come, as though we were weary of our warfare: it not a *Domine si fuisses, Lord if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died*[27], as Martha said of Lazarus, as though, as soon as we suffer any worldly calamity, we should think Christ to be absent from us, in his power, or in his care of us; it is not a *Domine vis mandemus, Lord wilt thou that we command fire from heaven to consume these Samaritans*[28], as though we would serve the Lord no longer, than he would revenge his own and our quarrel; for, (that we may come to our last part) to that fiery question of the apostles, Christ answered, *You know not of what spirit you are;* it is not the Spirit of God, it is not the Holy Ghost, which makes you call Jesus the Lord only to serve your own ends, and purposes; and *No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

For this part, we proposed only two considerations, first that this *but*, excluding all means but one, that one must therefore necessarily be difficult, and secondly that that *but*, admitting one means, that one must therefore necessarily be possible; so that there is a difficulty, but yet a possibility in having this working by the Holy Ghost. For the first, of those heretical words of Faustus the Manichean, That in the Trinity, the Father dwelt *In illa luce inaccessibili*, In that light which none can attain to, and the Son of God dwelt in this created light, whose fountain and root is the planet of the sun, and the Holy Ghost dwelt in the air, and other parts illumined by the sun, we may make this good use, that for the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, we have not so present, so evident light in reason, as for the knowledge of the other blessed persons of the glorious Trinity. For, for the Son, because he assumed our nature, and lived and died with us, we conceive certain bodily impressions, and notions of him; and then naturally, and necessarily, as soon as we hear of a son, we

[26] John xiii. 14. [27] John xi. 21. [28] Luke ix. 54.

conceive a father too. But the knowledge of the Holy Ghost is not so evident, neither do we bend our thoughts upon the consideration of the Holy Ghost, so much as we ought to do. The Arians enwrapped him in double clouds of darkness, when they called him *creaturam creaturæ;* that Christ himself, from whom (say they) the Holy Ghost had his creation, was but a creature, and not God, and so the Holy Ghost, the creature of a creature. And *Maximus ille gigas*, (as St. Bernard calls Plato) That giant in all kind of learning, Plato, never stopped at any knowledge, till he came to consider the Holy Ghost: *Unum inveni, quod cuncta operatur*, I have (says Plato) found one, who made all things; *Et unum per quod cuncta efficiuntur*, And I have found another, by whom all things were made; *Tertium autem non potui invenire*, A third, besides those two, I could never find.

Though all the mysteries of the Trinity be things equally easy to faith, when God infuses that, yet to our reason, (even as reason serves faith, and presents things to that) things are not so equal, but that St. Basil himself saw, that the eternal generation of the Son, was too hard for reason; but yet it is in the proceeding of the Holy Ghost, that he clearly professes his ignorance: *Si cuncta putarem nostra cogitatione posse comprehendi, vererer forte ignorantiam profiteri*, If I thought that all things might be known by man, I should be as much afraid, and ashamed, as another man, to be ignorant; but, says he, since we all see, that there are many things whereof we are ignorant, *Cur non de Spiritu Sancto, absque rubore, ignorantiam faterer?* Why should I be ashamed to confess mine ignorance in many things concerning the Holy Ghost?

There is then a difficulty, no less than an impossibility, in searching after the Holy Ghost, but it is in those things which appertain not to us; but in others, there is a possibility, a facility and easiness. For, there are two processions of the Holy Ghost, *Æterna*, and *Temporaria*, his proceeding from the Father, and the Son, and his proceeding into us. The first we shall never understand, if we read all the books of the world, the other we shall not choose but understand, if we study our own consciences. In the first, the darkness, and difficulty is recompensed in this, that though it be hard to find anything, yet it is but little that

we are to seek; it is only to find that there is a Holy Ghost, proceeding from Father, and Son; for in searching farther, the danger is noted by St. Basil, to be thus great, *Qui quomodo interrogas, et ubi ut in loco, et quando ut in tempore, interrogabis;* If thou give thy curiosity the liberty to ask how the Holy Ghost proceeded, thou wilt ask where it was done, as though there were several rooms, and distinct places in that which is infinite. And thou wilt ask when it was done, as though there were pieces of time, in that which is eternal: *Et quæres, non ut fidem, sed ut infidelitatem invenias,* (which is excellently added by that father) The end of thy inquiring will not be, that thou mightest find anything to establish thy belief, but to find something that might excuse thine unbelief; all thy curious questions are not in hope that thou shalt receive satisfaction, but in hope that the weakness of the answer may justify thy infidelity.

Thus it is, if we will be over-curious in the first, the eternal proceeding of the Holy Ghost. In the other, the proceeding of the Holy Ghost into us, we are to consider, that as in our natural persons, the body and soul do not make a perfect man, except they be united, except our spirits (which are the active part of the blood) do fit this body, and soul for one another's working; so, though the body of our religion may seem to be determined in these two, our creation, which is commonly attributed to the Father, *Tanquam fonti Deitatis,* As the fountain of the Godhead, (for Christ is God of God) and our redemption, which belongs to the Son, yet for this body there is a spirit, that is, the Holy Ghost, that takes this man, upon whom the Father hath wrought by creation, and the Son included within his redemption, and he works in him a vocation, a justification, and a sanctification, and leads him from that *esse,* which the Father gave him in the creation, and that *bene esse* which he hath in being admitted into the body of his Son, the visible church, and congregation, to an *optime esse,* to that perfection, which is an assurance of the inhabitation of this spirit in him, and an inchoation of eternal blessedness here, by a heavenly and sanctified conversation, without which spirit *No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord,* because he is not otherwise in a perfect obedience to him, if he embrace not the means ordained by him in his church.

So that this Spirit disposes, and dispenses, distributes, and disperses, and orders all the power of the Father, and all the wisdom of the Son, and all the graces of God. It is a centre to all; so St. Bernard says upon those words of the apostle, *We approve ourselves as the ministers of God;* but by what? *By watching, by fasting, by suffering, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. Vide, tanquam omnia ordinantem, quomodo in medio virtutum, sicut cor in medio corporis, constituit Spiritum Sanctum:* As the heart is in the midst of the body, so between these virtues of fasting and suffering before, and love unfeigned after, the apostle places the Holy Ghost, who only gives life and soul to all moral, and all theological virtues. And as St. Bernard observes that in particular men, so doth St. Augustine of the whole church; *Quod in corpore nostro anima, id in corpore Christi; ecclesia, Spiritus Sanctus;* That office which the soul performs to our body, the Holy Ghost performs in the body of Christ, which is the church.

And therefore since the Holy Ghost is thus necessary, and thus near, as at the creation the whole Trinity was intimated in that plural word, *Elohim, creavit Dii*, but no person of the Trinity is distinctly named in the creation, but the Holy Ghost, *The Spirit of God moved upon the waters*, as the Holy Ghost was first conveyed to our knowledge in the creation, so in our regeneration, by which we are new creatures, though our creation, and our redemption be religious subjects of our continual meditation, yet let us be sure to hold this that is nearest us, to keep a near, a familiar, and daily acquaintance, and conversation with the Holy Ghost, and to be watchful to cherish his light, and working in us. *Homines docent quærere, solus ipse, qui docet invenire, habere, frui*[29]; Men can teach us ways how to find some things; the pilot how to find a land, the astronomer how to find a star; men can teach us ways how to find God, the natural man in the book of creatures, the moral man in an exemplar life, the Jew in the law, the Christian in general in the Gospel, but *Solus ipse, qui docet invenire, habere, frui*, Only the Holy Ghost enables us to find God so, as to make him ours, and to enjoy him. First you must get more light than nature gives, for, *The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit*[30]: when that light is so

[29] Bernard. [30] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

mended, that you have some sparks of faith, you must also leav the works of the flesh, for, *Fleshly men have not the Spirit*[31] when the Spirit offers itself in approaches, *resist it not*, as Stephe accuses them to have done, Acts 7. When it hath prevailed and sealed you to God, *Grieve not the holy Spirit, by whom ye ar sealed unto redemption*[32]. For this preventing the Spirit, b trusting to nature, and morality, this infecting the Spirit, b living ill in a good profession, this grieving of the Spirit, b neglecting his operations, induces the last desperate work *quenching the Spirit*[33], which is a smothering, a suffocating that light by a final obduration.

*Spiritus ubi vult spirat*, says our Saviour Christ[34]; which S Augustine, (and indeed most of the fathers) interpret of th Holy Ghost, and not of the wind, though it may also properl enough admit that interpretation too. But *The Holy Ghost*, say he, *breathes where it pleases him; Et vocem ejus audis*, says Chris *You hear the voice of the Holy Ghost;* for, (says St. Augustin upon those words of Christ) *Sonat psalmus, vox est Spiritu Sancti*, When you hear a psalm sung, you hear the voice of th Holy Ghost; *Sonat evangelium, sonat sermo Divinus*, You he the Gospel read, you hear a sermon preached, still you hear t voice of the Holy Ghost; and yet, as Christ says in that pla *Nescis unde venit, Thou knowest not from whence that voice con* Thou canst find nothing in thyself, why the Holy Ghost sho delight to entertain thee, and hold discourse with thee, i familiar, and so frequent, and so importunate a speaking to t *Nescis unde venit*, Thou knowest not from whence all this ness comes, but merely from his goodness; so also, as Christ there, *Nescis quo vadat, Thou knowest not whither it goes* long it will last and go with thee. If thou carry him t and foul corners, if thou carry him back to those sins, of since he began to speak to thee, at this time, thou hast f remorse, some detestation, he will not go with thee, he thee over. But as long as he, the Spirit of God, by you ing of him, stays with you, when Jesus shall say to yo consciences) *Quid vos dicitis? Whom do you say th*

[31] Jude 19. [32] Ephes. iv. 30.
[33] 1 Thess. v. [34] John iii. 8.

You can say *Jesus Dominus*, we say, we profess, *That thou art Jesus, and that Jesus is the Lord:* if he proceed, *Si Dominus, ubi timor? If I be Lord, where is my fear?* You shall show your fear of him, even in your confidence in him, *In timore Domini, fiducia fortitudinis, In the fear of the Lord, is an assured strength:* You shall not only say *Jesum Dominum*, profess Jesus to be the Lord, but *Veni Domine Jesu*, you shall invite, and solicit Jesus to a speedy judgment, and be able, in his right, to stand upright in that judgment. This you have, if you have this spirit; and you may have this spirit, if you resist it not, now; for, *As when Peter spake, the Holy Ghost fell upon all that heard*[35], so in the ministry of his weaker instruments, he conveys, and diffuses, and seals his gifts upon all, which come well disposed to the receiving of him, in his ordinance.

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## SERMON XXXI.

### *PREACHED UPON WHITSUNDAY.*

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ACTS x. 44.

**While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them, which heard the word.**

[*Part of the second lesson of that day.*]

THAT which served for an argument amongst the Jews, to diminish, and undervalue Christ, *Have any of the rulers believed in him*[1]*?* had no force amongst the Gentiles, for amongst them, the first persons that are recorded to have applied themselves to the profession of the Christian religion, were rulers, persons of place, and quality: *Sanè propter hoc dignitates positæ sunt, ut major pietas ostendatur*, says St. Chrysostom, This is the true reason why men are ennobled, why men are raised, why men are enriched, that they might glorify God the more, by that eminency;

[35] Acts x. [1] John vii. 48.

this is truly to be a good student, *Scrutari Scripturas*, To search the Scriptures, in which is eternal life: this is truly to be called to the bar, to be crucified with Christ Jesus: and to be called to the bench, to have part in his resurrection, and reign in glory with him: and to be a judge, to judge thyself, that thou beest not judged to condemnation, by Christ Jesus: offices and titles, and dignities, make thee, in the eye, and tongue of the world, a better man; be truly a better man, between God and thee, for them, and they are well placed. Those pyramids and obelisks, which were raised up on high in the air, but supported nothing, were vain testimonies of the frivolousness, and impertinency of those men that raised them; but when we see pillars stand, we presume that something is to be placed upon them. They, who by their rank and place, are pillars of the state, and pillars of the church, if Christ and his glory be not raised higher by them, than by other men, put God's building most out of frame, and most discompose God's purposes, of any others. And therefore St. Chrysostom hath noted usefully, That the first of the Gentiles, which was converted to Christianity, was that eunuch, which was treasurer to the queen of Ethiopia[2]; and the second was this centurion, in whose house St. Peter preached this fruitful sermon, at which, *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word.*

Our parts will be two; first some circumstances that preceded this act, this miraculous descent and infusion of the Holy Ghost, and then the act, the descent itself. In the first, we shall consider first, the time, it was *when Peter was speaking*, when God's ordinance was then in executing, preaching; and secondly, what made way to this descent of the Holy Ghost, that is, what Peter was speaking, and preaching, *These words*, true and necessary doctrine; and here also we shall touch a little, the place, and the auditory, Cornelius, and his family. When from hence we shall descend to the second part, the descent of the Holy Ghost, we shall look first, (so as it may become us) upon the person, (the third person in the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity) and then upon his action, as it is expressed here, *Cecidit, He fell;* as of Christ it is said, *Deliciæ ejus cum filiis hominum, His delight is*

[2] Acts viii. 27.

*to be with the sons of men*, and, (to speak humanly, a perverse delight, for it was to be with the worst men, with publicans and sinners) so, (to speak humanly) the Holy Ghost had an extraordinary, a perverse ambition, to go downwards, to enlarge himself, in his working, by falling; *He fell:* and then, he fell so, as a shower of rain falls, that does not lie in those round drops in which it falls, but diffuses, and spreads and enlarges itself, *He fell upon all;* but then, it was because *all heard*, they came not to see a new action, preaching, nor a new preacher, Peter, nor to see one another at a sermon, *He fell upon all that heard;* where also, I think, it will not be impertinent, to make this note, That Peter is said to have spoken *those words*, but they, on whom the Holy Ghost fell, are said to have heard *The word;* it is not many words, long sermons, nor good words, witty and eloquent sermons that induce the Holy Ghost, for all these are words of men; and howsoever the whole sermon is the ordinance of God, the whole sermon is not the word of God: but when all the good gifts of men are modestly employed, and humbly received, as *vehicula Spiritus*, as St. Augustine calls them, the chariots of the Holy Ghost, as means afforded by God, to convey the word of life into us, in those words we hear the word, and there the word and the Spirit go together, as in our case in the text, *While Peter yet spake those words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word.*

When we come then to consider in the first place, the time of this miracle, we may easily see that verified in St. Peter's proceeding, which St. Ambrose says, *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*, The Holy Ghost cannot go at a slow pace; it is the devil in the serpent that creeps, but the Holy Ghost in the dove flies: and then, in the proceeding with the centurion, we may see that verified which Leo says, *Ubi Deus magister, quàm citò discitur!* Where God teaches, how fast a godly man learns! Christ did almost all his miracles in an instant, without dilatory circumstances; Christ says to the man sick of the palsy, *Take up thy bed and walk*[3], and immediately he did so: to the deaf man he says, *Ephphatha, Be thine ears opened*[4], and instantly they were opened: he says to the woman with the issue of blood,

[3] Mark ii. 11. [4] Mark vii. 34.

*Esto sana à plaga tua*[5], and she was not only well immediately upon that, but she was well before, when she had but touched the hem of his garment. Upon him who had lain in his infirmity thirty-eight years, at the pool, Christ makes a little stop; but it was no longer than to try his disposition with that question, *Vis sanus fieri*[6]? Christ was sure what his answer would be; and as soon as he gives that answer, immediately he recovered. Where Christ seems to have stayed longest, which was upon the blind man[7], yet at his first touch, that man saw men walk, though not distinctly, but at the second touch he saw perfectly. As Christ proceeds in his miracles, so doth the Holy Ghost in his powerful instructions. It is true, *Scientiæ sunt profectus*[8], There is a growth in knowledge, and we overcome ignorances by degrees, and by succession of more and more light: Christ himself grew in knowledge, as well as in stature: but this is in the way of experimental knowledge, by study, by conversation, by other acquisitions. But when the Holy Ghost takes a man into his school, he deals not with him, as a painter, which makes an eye, and an ear, and a lip, and passes his pencil a hundred times over every muscle, and every hair, and so in many sittings makes up one man, but he deals as a printer, that in one strain delivers a whole story.

We see that in this example of St. Peter, St. Peter had conceived a doubt, whether it were lawful for him to preach the Gospel to any of the Gentiles, because they were not within the covenant; this was the *sanus fieri*, this very scruple was the voice and question of God in him: to come to a doubt, and to a debatement in any religious duty, is the voice of God in our conscience: would you know the truth? Doubt, and then you will inquire: and *Facile solutionem accipit anima, quæ prius dubitavit*, says St. Chrysostom. As no man resolves of anything wisely, firmly, safely, of which he never doubted, never debated, so neither doth God withdraw a resolution from any man, that doubts with an humble purpose to settle his own faith, and not with a wrangling purpose to shake another man's. God rectifies Peter's doubt immediately, and he rectifies it fully; he presents him a book,

[5] Mark v. 34. [6] John v. 5. [7] Mark viii. [8] Chrysostom.

and a commentary, the text, and the exposition: he lets down[9] a sheet from heaven with all kind of beasts and fowls, and tells him, that *Nothing is unclean*, and he tells him by the same spirit[10], That there were three men below to ask for him, who were sent by God to apply that visible parable, and that God meant, in saying *Nothing was unclean*, that the Gentiles generally, and in particular, this centurion Cornelius, were not incapable of the Gospel, nor unfit for his ministry. And though Peter had been very hungry, and would fain have eaten, as appears in the tenth verse, yet after he received this instruction, we hear no more mention of his desire to eat; but, as his Master had said, *Cibus meus est, My meat is to do my Father's will that sent me*, so his meat was to do him good that sent for him, and so he made haste to go with those messengers.

The time then was, when Peter thus prepared by the Holy Ghost, was to prepare others for the Holy Ghost, and therefore it was, *Cum locutus, When he spoke*, that is, preached to them. For, *Si adsit palatum fidei, cui sapiat mel Dei*, says St. Augustine, To him who hath a spiritual taste, no honey is so sweet, as the word of God preached according to his ordinance. If a man taste a little of this honey at his rod's end, as Jonathan did[11], though he think his eyes enlightened, as Jonathan did, he may be in Jonathan's case, *I did but taste a little honey with my rod, et ecce, morior, and behold, I die.* If the man read the Scriptures a little, superficially, perfunctorily, his eyes seem straightways enlightened, and he thinks he sees everything that he had preconceived, and fore-imagined in himself, as clear as the sun, in the Scriptures: he can find flesh in the sacrament, without bread, because he finds *Hoc est corpus meum, This is my body*, and he will take no more of that honey, no more of those places of Scripture, where Christ says, *Ego vitis*, and *Ego porta*, that he is *a vine*, and that he is *a gate*, as literally as he seems to say, that *that is his body.* So also he can find wormwood in this honey, because he finds in this Scripture, *Stipendium peccati mors est*, that *The reward of sin is death*, and he will take no more of that honey, not the *Quandocunque*, That at what time soever a sinner repents, he shall have mercy. As the essential word of God, the Son of God, is Light

[9] Ver. 11. [10] Ver. 19. [11] 1 Sam. xiv. 27.

of Light, so the written word of God is light of light too, one place of Scripture takes light of another: and if thou wilt read so, and hear so, as thine own affections transport, and mislead thee; if when a corrupt confidence in thine own strength possesses thee, thou read only those passages, *Quare moriemini, domus Israel? Why will ye die, O house of Israel?* and conclude out of that, that thou hast such a free will of thine own, as that thou canst give life to thyself, when thou wilt; if when a vicious dejection of spirit, and a hellish melancholy, and declination towards desperation possesses thee, thou read only those passages, *Impossibile est, That it is impossible, that he that falls, after he hath been enlightened, should be renewed again;* and if thou hear sermons so, as that thou art glad, when those sins are declaimed against, which thou art free from, but wouldst hear no more, wouldst not have thine own sin touched upon, though all reading, and all hearing be honey, yet if thou take so little of this honey, Jonathan's case will be thy case, *Ecce, morieris*, thou wilt die of that honey; for the Scriptures are made to agree with one another, but not to agree to thy particular taste and humour.

But yet, the counsel is good, on the other side too, *Hast thou found honey? eat so much thereof as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it*[12]. Content thyself with reading those parts of Scriptures, which are clear, and edify, and perplex not thyself with prophecies not yet performed; and content thyself with hearing those sermons, which rectify thee *In credendis*, and *In agendis*, in all those things, which thou art bound to believe, and bound to practise, and run not after those men, who pretend to know those things, which God hath not revealed to his church. Too little, or too much of this honey, of this reading, and of this hearing, may be unwholesome: God hath chosen ways of mediocrity; he redeemed us not, by God alone, nor by man alone, but by him, who was both. He instructs us not, by the Holy Ghost alone, without the ministry of man, nor by the minister alone, without the assistance of the Holy Ghost. An angel appeared to Cornelius, but that angel bid him *send for Peter:* the Holy Ghost visits us, and disposes us, but yet the Holy Ghost sends us to the ministry of man: *Non dedignatur*

[12] Prov. xxv. 16.

*docere per hominem, qui dignatus est esse homo*, says St. Augustine; He that came to us, as man, is content that we go to men, for our instruction. Preaching is the ordinary means; that which St. Peter wrought upon them, was, *Cum locutus*, when he had, and because he had preached unto them.

And it was also *Dum locutus est*, *Whilst he yet spake those words; Non permittit Spiritus absolvi sermonem*, says St. Chrysostom; The Holy Ghost did not leave them to future meditations, to future conferences, he did not stay till they told one another after the sermon, that it was a learned sermon, a conscientious sermon, a useful sermon, but whilst the preacher yet spoke, the Holy Ghost spoke to their particular consciences. And as a gardener takes every bough of a young tree, or of a vine, and leads them, and places them against a wall, where they may have most advantage, and so produce, most, and best fruit: so the Holy Ghost leads and places the words, and sentences of the preacher, one upon an usurer, another upon an adulterer, another upon an ambitious person, another upon an active or passive briber, when the preacher knows of no usurer, no adulterer, no ambitious person, no briber active or passive, in the congregation. Nay, it is not only *whilst he was yet speaking*, but, as St. Peter himself reports the same story, in the next chapter, *As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell upon them*[13].

Perchance in the beginning of a sermon, the reprehension of the preacher falls not upon me, it is not come to me; but, when as the duties of the preacher are expressed by the apostle, to be these three[14], *To reprove*, or *convince* by argument, to settle truths, to overthrow errors; and *to exhort*, to rectify our manners; and *to rebuke*, to denounce God's judgments upon the refractory; whatsoever he says the two first ways, by *convincing*, and by *exhorting*, all that belongs to all, from the beginning; and for that which he shall say, the third way, by way of *rebuking*, as I know at midnight, that the sun will break out upon me to-morrow, though I know not how it works upon those places, where it shines then, so, though I know not how the rebukes of the preacher work upon their consciences, whose sins he rebukes at the beginning, yet I must make account that he will meet with

[13] Ver. 15. [14] 2 Tim. iv. 2.

my sin too; and if he do not meet with my present sin, that sin which is my second wife, that sin which I have married now, (not after a divorce from my former sin, so, as that I have put away that sin, but after the death of that sin, which sickness or poverty hath made me unable to continue in) yet if he bend himself upon that sin, which hath been my sin, or may be my sin, I must be sensible that the Holy Ghost hath offered himself to me, whilst he yet speaks, and ever since he began to speak; and, *Cum locutus*, Because preaching is the ordinary means, and, *Dum locutus*, Because the Holy Ghost intends all for my edification, I must embrace and entertain the Holy Ghost, who exhibits himself to me, from the beginning, and not say, This concerns not me; for whatsoever the preacher can say of God's mercy in Christ Jesus to any man, all that belongs to me, for no man hath received more of that, than I may do; and whatsoever the preacher can say of sin, all the way, all that belongs to me, for no man hath ever done any sin, which I should not have done, if God had left me to myself, and to mine own perverseness towards sin, and to mine own insatiableness in sin.

It was then, when he preached, and whilst he preached, and as soon as he preached, but when, and whilst, and as soon as he preached thus, thus as is expressed here, *Whilst he spake these words:* in which, we shall only touch, but not much insist upon, his manner first, and then his matter; and for his manner, we consider only here, his preparation, and no other circumstance. Though St. Peter say to them, when he came, *I ask therefore, for what intent you have sent for me*[15], yet God had intimated to him before, that it was to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; and therefore some time of meditation he had; though in such a person as St. Peter, so filled with all gifts necessary for his function, and to such persons as Cornelius was, who needed but catechizing in the rudiments of the Gospel, much preparation needed not. The case was often of the same sort, after, in the primitive church; the persons were very able, and the people very ignorant; and therefore it is easy to observe a far greater frequency of preaching amongst the ancient fathers, than ordinarily, men that love ease, will apprehend. We see evidently

[15] Ver. 29.

in St. Augustine's hundred and forty-fourth sermon *De tempore*, and in St. Ambrose's forty-fourth sermon *De sancto latrone*, and in St. Bernard's twelve sermons upon one psalm, that all these blessed and reverend fathers preached more than one day, divers days together, without intermission: and we may see in St. Basil's second homily upon the six days' work, that he preached in the afternoon; and so, by occasion of his often preaching, it seems by his second homily *De baptismo*, that he preached sometimes extemporally. But of all this, the reason is as evident as the fact, the preachers were able to say much, the people were capable but of little: and where it was not so, the clergy often assisted themselves with one another's labours; as St. Cyril's sermons were studied without book, and preached over again to their several congregations, by almost all the bishops of the eastern church. Sometimes we may see texts extended to very many sermons, and sometimes texts taken of that extent and largeness, as only a paraphrase upon the text would make the sermon; for we may see by St. Augustine's tenth sermon *De verbis apostoli*, that they took sometimes the epistle and gospel of the day, and the psalm before the sermon for their text.

But in these our times, when the curiosity, (allow it a better name, for truly, God be blessed for it, it deserves a better name) when the capacity of the people requires matter of more labour, as there is not the same necessity, so there is not the same possibility of that assiduous, and that sudden preaching. No man will think that we have abler preachers than the primitive church had; no man will doubt, but that we have learneder, and more capable auditories, and congregations than theirs were. The apostles were not negligent, when they mended their nets: a preacher is not negligent, if he prepare for another sermon, after he hath made one; nor a hearer is not negligent, if he meditate upon one sermon, though he hear not another within three hours after. St. Peter's sermon was not extemporal; neither if it had (his person, and the quality of the hearers, being compared with our times) had that been any precedent, or pattern for our times, to do the like. But yet, beloved, since our times are such, as are overtaken with another necessity, that our adversaries dare come, *Cum locutus est*, as soon as the preacher hath done, and meet the

people coming out of the church, and deride the preacher, and offer an answer to anything that hath been said; since they are come to come to church with us, and *Dum locutus est*, then when the preacher is speaking, to say to him, that sits next him, That is false, that is heretical; since they are come to join with us at the communion, so that it is hard to find out the Judas, and if you do find him, he dares answer, Your minister is no priest, and so your bread and wine no sacrament, and therefore I care not how much of it I take; since they are come to boast, that with all our assiduity of preaching, we cannot keep men from them; since it is thus, as we were always bound by Christ's example, *To gather you as a hen gathers her chickens*, (to call you often to this assembling of yourselves) so are we now much more bound to hide and cover you, as a hen doth her chickens, and because there is a kite hovering in every corner, (a seducer lurking in every company) to defend and arm you, with more and more instructions against their insinuations. And if they deride us, for often preaching, and call us fools for that, as David said, *He would be more vile*, he would dance more, so let us be more fools, in this foolishness of preaching, and preach more. If they think us mad, since we are mad for our souls, (as the apostle speaks) let us be more mad; let him that hath preached once, do it twice, and him that hath preached twice, do it thrice. But yet, not this, by coming to a negligent, and extemporal manner of preaching, but we will be content to take so many hours from our rest, that we, with you, may rest the safelier in Abraham's bosom, and so many more hours from our meat, that we, with you, may the more surely eat and drink with the Lamb, in the kingdom of heaven. Christ hath undertaken, that his word shall not pass away, but he hath not undertaken that it shall not pass from us: there is a *Ne exeas mundum* served upon the world, the Gospel cannot go, nor be driven out of the world, till the end of the world; but there is not a *Ne exeas regnum*, the Gospel may go out of this, or any kingdom, if they slacken in the doing of those things which God hath ordained for the means of keeping it, that is, a zealous, and yet a discreet; a sober, and yet a learned assiduity in preaching.

Thus far then we have been justly carried, in consideration of

this circumstance in the manner of his preaching, his preparation; in descending to the next, which is the matter of his sermon, we see much of that in his text. St. Peter took his text here, ver. 34, out of Deuteronomy, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons*[16]. Where, because the words are not precisely the same in Deuteronomy, as they are in this text, we find just occasion to note, that neither Christ in his preaching, nor the Holy Ghost in penning the Scriptures of the New Testament, were so curious as our times, in citing chapters and verses, or such distinctions, no nor in citing the very, very words of the places. Heb. iv. 4. There is a sentence cited thus indefinitely, *It is written in a certain place*, without more particular note: and, to pass over many, conducing to that purpose, if we consider that one place in the prophet Esay (*Make the heart of this people fat, make their eyes heavy, and shut them, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed*[17]) and consider the same place, as it is cited six several times in the New Testament, we shall see, that they stood not upon such exact quotations, and citing of the very words. But to that purpose, for which St. Peter had taken that text, he follows his text. Now, beloved, I do not go about to include St. Peter's whole sermon into one branch, of one part, of one of mine: only I refresh to your memories, that which I presume you have often read in this story, and this chapter, that though St. Peter say, *That God is no such accepter of persons, but that in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*[18], yet it is upon this ground, Christ Jesus is Lord of all; and, (as it is, ver. 42.) *He hath commanded us to preach;* that is, he hath established a church, and therein, visible means of salvation; and then, this is our general text, the subject of all our sermons, *That through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of sins*[19]. So that this is all that we dare avow concerning salvation, that howsoever God may afford salvation to some in all nations, yet he hath manifested to us no way of conveying salvation to them, but by the manifestation of Christ Jesus in his ordinance of preaching.

[16] Deut. x. 17. [17] Isaiah vi. 10. [18] Ver. 35, 36. [19] Ver. 43.

And such a manifestation of Christ, had God here ordained for this centurion Cornelius. But why for him? I do not ask reasons of God's mercy to particular men; for if I would do so, when should I find a reason, why he hath showed mercy to me? But yet, *Audite omnes, qui in militia estis, et regibus assistitis*[20], All that serve in wars, or courts, may find something to imitate in this centurion; *He was a devout man;* a soldier, and yet devout; God forbid they were so incompatible, as that courage, and devotion might not consist: *A man that feared God;* a soldier's profession is fearlessness; and only he that fears God, fears nothing else: *He and all his house;* a soldier, yet kept a house, and did not always wander; he kept his house in good order, and with good means: *He gave much alms;* though arms be an expensive profession for outward splendour, yet he reserved for alms, much alms: *And he prayed to God always;* though arms require much time for the duties thereof, yet he could pray at those times; in his trenches, at the assault, or at the defence of a breach, he could pray: all this the Holy Ghost testifies of him together, ver. 2. And this was his general disposition; and then, those who came from him to Peter, add this, *That he had a good report amongst all the nations of the Jews*, ver. 22, and this to a stranger, (for the Jews loved not strangers) and one that served the state, in such a place, as that he could not choose but be heavy to the Jews, was hard to have. And then, himself, when Peter comes to him, adds thus much more, That this first mercy of God in having sent his angel, and that farther mercy, that that angel named a man, and then that man came, was exhibited to him, then, when he was fasting. And then, this man, thus humbled and macerated by fasting, thus suppled and entendered with the fear of God, thus burnt up and calcined with zeal and devotion, thus united to God by continual prayer, thus tributary to God by giving alms, thus exemplar in himself at home, to lead all his house, and thus diffusive of himself to others abroad, to gain the love of good men, this man prostrates himself to Peter at his coming, in such an over-reverential manner, as Peter durst not accept, but took him up, and said, *I myself am also a man*[21]; sudden devotion comes quickly near superstition.

[20] Chrysostom. [21] Ver. 26.

This is a misery, which our time hath been well acquainted with, and had much experience of, and which grows upon us still, that when men have been mellowed with the fear of God, and by heavy corrections, and calamities, brought to a greater tenderness of conscience than before, in that distemper of melancholy, and inordinate sadness, they have been easiliest seduced and withdrawn to a superstitious and idolatrous religion. I speak this, because from the highest to the lowest place there are sentinels planted in every corner, to watch all advantages, and if a man lose his preferment at court, or lose his child at home, or lose any such thing as affects him much, and imprints a deep sadness for the loss thereof, they work upon that sadness, to make him a papist. When men have lived long from God, they never think they come near enough to him, except they go beyond him; because they have never offered to come to him before, now when they would come, they imagine God to be so hard of access, that there is no coming to him, but by the intervention, and intercession of saints; and they think that that church, in which they have lived ill, cannot be a good church; whereas, if they would accustom themselves in a daily performing of Christian duties, to an ordinary presence of God, religion would not be such a stranger, nor devotion such an ague unto them. But when Peter had rectified Cornelius, in this mistaking, in this over-valuing of any person, and then saw Cornelius' disposition, who had brought materials to erect a church in his house, by calling his kinsmen, and his friends together to hear Peter, Peter spoke those words, *Which whilst he yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word.* And so we are fallen into our second part.

In this, the first consideration falls upon the person that fell: and as the Trinity is the most mysterious piece of our religion, and hardest to be comprehended, so in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost is the most mysterious person, and hardest to be expressed. We are called the household of God, and the family of the faithful; and therefore out of a contemplation, and ordinary acquaintance with the parts of families, we are apter to conceive any such thing in God himself, as we see in a family. We seem not to go so far out of our way of reason, to believe a

father, and a son, because father and son are pieces of families: nor in believing Christ and his church, because husband and wife are pieces of families. We go not so far in believing God's working upon us, either by ministering from above, or by his spiritual ministers here upon earth, for masters and servants are pieces of families. But does there arise any such thing, out of any of these couples, father and son, husband and wife, master and servant, as should come from them, and they be no whit before neither? Is there anything in natural or civil families, that should assist our understanding to apprehend this, that in heaven there should be a Holy Spirit, so, as that the Father, and the Son, being all spirit, and all holy, and all holiness, there should be another Holy Spirit, which had all their essential holiness in him, and another holiness too, *sanctitatem sanctificantem*, a holiness, that should make us holy?

It was a hard work for the apostles, and their successors, at first, to draw the Godhead into one, into an unity: when the Gentiles had been long accustomed to make every power and attribute of God, and to make every remarkable creature of God a several god, and so to worship God, in a multiplicity of gods, it was a great work to limit, and determine their superstitious, and superfluous devotion in one God. But when all these lines were brought into one centre, not to let that centre rest, but to draw lines out of that again, and bring more persons into that one centrical Godhead, this was hard for reason to digest: but yet to have extended that from that unity, to a duality, was not so much, as to a triplicity. And thereupon, though the Arians would never be brought to confess an equality between the Son and the Father, they were much farther from confessing it in the Holy Ghost: they made, says St. Augustine, *Filium creaturam*[21], The Son, they accounted to be but a creature; but they made the Holy Ghost *creaturam creaturæ*, not only a creature, and no god, but not a creature of God's, but a creature, a messenger of the Son, who was himself (with them) but a creature. But these mysteries are not to be chewed by reason, but to be swallowed by faith; we professed three persons in one God, in the simplicity of our infancy, at our baptism, and we have sealed

[21] Hæres. XLIX.

that contract, in the other sacrament often since; and this is eternal life, to die in that belief. *There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one*[23]; and in that testimony we rest, that there is a Holy Ghost, and in the testimony of this text, that this Holy Ghost falls down upon all that hear the word of God.

Now, it is as wonderful that this Holy Ghost should fall down from heaven, as that he should be in heaven. *Quomodo cecidisti? How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, thou son of the morning?* was a question asked by the prophet[24], of him, who was so fallen, as that he shall never return again. But the Holy Ghost, (as mysterious in his actions, as in his essential, or in his personal being) fell so from heaven, as that he remained in heaven, even then when he was fallen. This dove sent from heaven, did more than that dove, which was sent out of the ark[25]; that went and came, but was not in both places at once; Noah could not have showed that dove to his sons and daughters, in the ark, then, when the dove was flown out: but now, when this dove, the Holy Ghost, fell upon these men, at Peter's sermon, Stephen, who was then come up to heaven, saw the same dove, the same Holy Ghost, whom they, whom he had left upon the earth, fell upon the earth then: as if the Holy Ghost fall upon any in this congregation now, now the saints of God see that Holy Ghost in heaven, whom they that are here, feel falling upon them here. In all his workings the Holy Ghost descends, for there is nothing above him. There is a third heaven; but no such third heaven, as is above the heaven of heavens, above the seat and residence of the Holy Ghost: so that whatsoever he doth, is a descent, a diminution, a humiliation, and an act of mercy, because it is a communication of himself, to a person inferior to himself.

But there is more in this text, than a descent. When the Holy Ghost came upon Christ himself, after his baptism, there it is said, *He descended:* though Christ as the Son of God, were equal to him, and so it was no descent for the Holy Ghost to come to him, yet because Christ had a nature upon him, in which he was not equal to the Holy Ghost, here was a double descent in the Holy Ghost, that he who dwells with the Father and the

[23] 1 John v. 7. [24] Isaiah xiv. 12. [25] Gen. viii. 7.

Son, in light inaccessible, and too bright to be seen, would descend in a visible form, to be seen by men, and that he descended and wrought upon a mortal man, though that man were Christ. Christ also had a double descending too; he descended to be a man, and he descended to be no man; he descended to live amongst us, and he descended to die amongst us; he descended to the earth, and he descended to hell: every operation of every person of the holy, and blessed, and glorious Trinity, is a descending; but here the Holy Ghost is said to have fallen, which denotes a more earnest communicating of himself, a throwing, a pouring out of himself, upon those, upon whom he falls: he falls as a fall of waters, that covers that it falls upon; as a hawk upon a prey, it desires and it will possess that it falls upon; as an army into a country, it conquers, and it governs where it falls. The Holy Ghost falls, but far otherwise, upon the ungodly. *Whosoever shall fall upon this stone, shall be broken, but upon whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder*[26]. Indeed, he falls upon him so, as hail falls upon him; he falls upon him so, as he falls from him, and leaves him in an obduration, and impenitibleness, and in an irrecoverable ruin of him, that hath formerly despised, and despited the Holy Ghost. But when the Holy Ghost falls not thus in a nature of a stone, but puts on the nature of a dove, and a dove with an olive-branch, and that in the ark, that is, testimonies of our peace, and reconciliation to God, in his church, he falls as that kind of lightning, which melts swords, and hurts not scabbards; the Holy Ghost shall melt thy soul, and not hurt thy body; he shall give thee spiritual blessings, and saving graces, under the temporal seals of bodily health, and prosperity in this world: he shall let thee see, that thou art the child of God, in the obedience of thy children to thee, and that thou art the servant of God, in the faithfulness of thy servants to thee, and that thou standest in the favour of God, by the favour of thy superiors to thee; he shall fall upon thy soul, and not wound thy body, give thee spiritual prosperity, and yet not by worldly adversity, and evermore over-shadow and refresh thy soul, and yet evermore keep thee in his sunshine, and the light of his countenance.

[26] Matt. xxi. 44.

But there is more than this, in this falling of the Holy Ghost, in this text. For it was not such a particular insinuation of the Holy Ghost, as that he conveyed himself into those particular men, for their particular good, and salvation, and determined there; but such a powerful, and diffusive falling, as made his presence, and his power in them, to work upon others also. So when he came upon Christ, it was not to add anything to Christ, but to inform others, that that was Christ: so when Christ breathed his spirit into the apostles, it was not merely to infuse salvation into them, but it was especially to seal to them that patent, that commission, *quorum remiseritis*, that others might receive remission of sins, by their power. So the Holy Ghost fell upon these men here, for the benefit of others, that thereby a great doubt might be removed, a great scruple divested, a great disputation extinguished, whether it were lawful to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, or no; for, as we see in the next chapter[27], Peter himself was reproved of the Jews, for this that he had done: and therefore, God ratified, and gave testimony to this service of his, by this miraculous falling of the Holy Ghost, as St. Augustine makes the reason of this falling, very justly to have been; so then, this falling of the Holy Ghost, was not properly, or not merely an infusing of justifying grace, but an infusing of such gifts, as might edify others: for, St. Peter speaking of this very action, in the next chapter, says, *The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us, in the beginning*[28]; which was, when he fell upon them, as this day. This doth not imply *graduum æqualitatem*, an equal measure of the same gifts, as the apostles had, who were to pass over the whole world, and work upon all men, but it implies *doni identitatem*, it was the same miraculous expressing of the presence, and working of the Holy Ghost, for the confirmation of Peter, that the Gentiles might be preached unto, and for the consolation of the Gentiles, that they might be enabled to preach to one another: for so it is expressly said in this chapter, *That they heard these men speak with divers tongues*[29]; they that heard the preacher, were made partakers of the same gifts that the preacher had; a good hearer becomes a good preacher, that is, able to edify others.

[27] Ver. 2. [28] Ver. 15. [29] Ver. 46.

It is true, that these men were not to be literally preachers, as the apostles (upon whom the Holy Ghost fell, as upon them) were, and therefore the gift of tongues may seem not to have been so necessary to them. But it is not only the preacher, that hath use of the tongue, for the edification of God's people, but in all our discourses, and conferences with one another, we should preach his glory, his goodness, his power, that every man might speak one another's language, and preach to one another's conscience; that when I accuse myself, and confess mine infirmities to another man, that man may understand, that there is, in that confession of mine, a sermon, and a rebuke, and a reprehension to him, if he be guilty of the same sin; nay, if he be guilty of a sin contrary to mine. For, as in that language in which God spoke, the Hebrew, the same root will take in words of a contrary signification, (as the word of Job's wife signifies blessing and cursing too) so the covetous man that hears me confess my prodigality, should argue to himself, If prodigality, which howsoever it hurt a particular person, yet spreads money abroad, which is the right and natural use of money, be so heavy a sin, how heavy is my covetousness, which, besides that it keeps me all the way in as much penuriousness, as the prodigal man brings himself to at last, is also a public sin, because it imprisons that money which should be at liberty, and employed in a free course abroad? And so also when I declare to another, the spiritual and temporal blessings which God hath bestowed upon me, he may be raised to a thankful remembrance, that he hath received all that from God also. This is not the use of having learned divers tongues, to be able to talk of the wars with Dutch captains, or of trade with a French merchant, or of state with a Spanish agent, or of pleasure with an Italian epicure; it is not to entertain discourse with strangers, but to bring strangers to a better knowledge of God, in that way, wherein we, by his ordinance, do worship and serve him.

Now this place is ill detorted by the Roman church, for the confirmation of their sacrament of confirmation: that because the Holy Ghost fell upon men, at another time than at baptism, therefore there is a less perfect giving of the Holy Ghost, in baptism. It is too forward a triumph in him, who says of this place,

*Locus insignis ad assertionem sacramenti manus impositionis*[80]: That is an evident place for confirmation of the sacrament of confirmation: it is true, that St. Cyprian says there, That a man is not truly sanctified, *nisi utroque sacramento nascatur*, except he be regenerate by both sacraments: and he tells us what those two sacraments are, *aqua et spiritus*, water and the spirit, that except a man have both these seals, inward and outward, he is not safe: and St. Cyprian requires (and usefully truly) an outward declaration of this inward seal, of this giving of the Holy Ghost: for he instances expressly in this, which was done in this text, that there was both baptism, and a giving of the Holy Ghost. Neither would St. Cyprian[81] forbear the use of confirmation, because it was also in use amongst some heretics, *Quia Novatianus facere audet, non putabimus nos esse faciendum?* Shall we give over a good custom, because the Novatians do the like? *Quia Novatianus extra ecclesiam, vendicat sibi veritatis imaginem, relinquemus ecclesiæ veritatem?* Shall the church forbear any of those customs, which were induced to good purposes, because some heretics, in a false church, have counterfeited them, or corrupted them? And therefore, says that father, it was so in the apostle's time, *Et nunc quoque apud nos geritur*, We continue it so in our time, that they who are baptized, *signaculo Dominico consummentur*, that they may have a ratification, a consummation in this seal of the Holy Ghost: which was not in the primitive church (as in the later Roman church) a confirmation of baptism, so, as that that sacrament should be but a half-sacrament, but it was a confirmation of Christians, with an increase of grace, when they came to such years, as they were naturally exposed to some temptations.

Our church acknowledges the true use of this confirmation; for, in the first collect in the office of confirmation, it confesses, that that child is already regenerated by water and the Holy Ghost; and prays only for farther strength: and having like a good mother, taught us the right use of it, then our church, like a supreme commander too, enjoins expressly, that none be admitted to the communion, till they have received their confirmation. And though this injunction be not in rigour and exact-

[80] Pamelius Annot. in Cypr. Epist. 72. [81] Cypr. Epist. 72.

ness pursued and executed, yet it is very necessary that the purpose thereof should be maintained; that is, that none should be received to the communion, till they had given an account of their faith and proficiency. For, he is but an interpretative, but a presumptive Christian, who, because he is so old, ventures upon the sacrament. A beard does not make a man fit for the sacrament, nor a husband, a woman: a man may be a great officer in the state, and a woman may be a grandmother in the family, and yet not be fit for that sacrament, if they have never considered more in it, but only to do as others do. The church enjoins a precedent confirmation; where that is not, we require yet a precedent examination, before any be admitted, at first, to the sacrament.

This was then the effectual working of the Holy Ghost, *non spiravit*, he did not only breathe upon them, and try whether they would receive the savour of life unto life, or no: *non sibilavit*, he did not only whisper unto them, and try whether they had a disposition to hear, and answer; *non incubabat*, he did not only hover over them, and sit upon them, to try what he could hatch, and produce out of them; *non descendit*, he did not only descend towards them, and try whether they would reach out their hand to receive him; but *cecidit*, he fell, so, as that he possessed them, enwrapped them, invested them with a penetrating, with a powerful force; and so, he fell upon them all. As we have read of some generals, in secular story, that in great services have knighted their whole army, so the Holy Ghost sanctifies, and canonizes whole congregations.

They are too good husbands, and too thrifty of God's grace, too sparing of the Holy Ghost, that restrain God's general propositions, *venite omnes*, let all come, and *vult omnes salvos*, God would have all men saved, so particularly, as to say, that when God says *all*, he means some of all sorts, some men, some women, some Jews, some Gentiles, some rich, some poor, but he does not mean, as he seems to say, simply all. Yes; God does mean, simply all, so as that no man can say to another, God means not thee, no man can say to himself, God means not me. *Nefas est dicere, Deum aliquid, nisi bonum prædestinare;* it is modestly said by St. Augustine, and more were immodesty; There is no

predestination in God, but to good. And therefore it is *durus sermo*, they are hard words, to say, that God predestinated some, not only *ad damnationem*, but *ad causas damnationis*, not only to damnation because they sinned, but to a necessity of sinning, that they might the more justly be damned; and to say, that God rejected some *odio libero*, out of a hate, that arose primarily in himself, against those persons, before those persons were created, (so much as in God's intention) and not out of any hate of their sins, which he foresaw.

Beloved, we are to take in no other knowledge of God's decrees, but by the execution thereof; how should we know any decree in God, of the creation of man, according to his image, but by the execution? Because I see that man is created so, as I conceive to be intended in this phrase, *after his image*, I believe that he decreed to create him so: because God does nothing extemporally, but according to his own most holy, and eternal preconceptions, and ideas, and decrees. So, we know his decree of election, and reprobation, by the execution; and how is that? Does God ever say, that any shall be saved or damned, without relation, without condition, without doing, (in the Old Testament) and, in the New Testament, without believing in Christ Jesus? If faith in Christ Jesus be in the execution of the decree, faith in Christ Jesus was in the decree itself too. Christ wept for the imminent calamities, temporal and spiritual, which hung over Jerusalem; and *Lacrymæ legati doloris*, says St. Cyprian, Tears are the ambassadors of sorrow; and they are *Sanguis animi vulnerati*, says St. Augustine, Tears are the blood of a wounded soul; and would Christ bleed out of a wounded soul, and weep out of a sad heart, for that, which himself, and only himself, by an absolute decree, had made necessary and inevitable? *The Scribes and Pharisees rejected the counsel of God*, says St. Luke[32]: in this new language we must say, they fulfilled the counsel of God, if positively, and primarily, and absolutely, God's determinate counsel were, that they should do so. But this is not God's counsel upon any, to be so far the author of sin, as to impose such a necessity of sinning, as arises not out of his own will. *Perditio nostra ex nobis*, Our destruction is from our own

[32] Luke vii. 30.

sin, and the devil that infuses it; not from God, or any ill purpose in him that enforces us. The blood of Christ was shed for all that will apply it, and the Holy Ghost is willing to fall, with the sprinkling of that blood, upon all that do not resist him; and that is, as follows in our text, *qui audiunt*, the Holy Ghost fell upon all that heard.

Faith in Christ is in the execution of God's decree, and hearing is the means of this faith: and the proposition is not the less general, if it except them, who will not be included in it, if the Holy Ghost fall not on them, who will not come to hear. Let no man think that he hath heard enough, and needs no more; why did the Holy Ghost furnish his church with four evangelists, if it were enough to read one? And yet every one of the four, hath enough for salvation, if God's abundant care had not enriched the church with more: those nations which never heard of Christ, or of evangelist, shall rise up in judgment against us, and though they perish themselves, thus far aggravate our condemnation, as to say, you had four evangelists, and have not believed, if we had had any one of them, we would have been saved. It is the glory of God's word, not that it is come, but that it shall remain for ever: it is the glory of a Christian, not that he hath heard, but that he desires to hear still. Are the angels weary of looking upon that face of God, which they looked upon yesterday? Or are the saints weary of singing that song, which they sung to God's glory yesterday? And is not that Hallelujah, that song which is their morning and evening sacrifice, and which shall be their song, world without end, called still *a new song*?

Be not you weary of hearing those things which you have heard from others before: do not say, if I had known this, I would not have come, for I have heard all this before; since thou never thoughtest of it since that former hearing, till thou heardest it again now, thou didst not know that thou hadst heard it before. Gideon's fleece[88], that had all the dew of heaven in itself alone, and all about it dry, one day, next day was all dry in itself, though all about it had received the dew: he that hath heard, and believed, may lose his knowledge, and his faith too, if he will

[88] Judges vi. 36.

hear no more. They say there is a way of castration, in cutting off the ears: there are certain veins behind the ears, which, if they be cut, disable a man from generation. The ears are the aqueducts of the water of life; and if we cut off those, that is, intermit our ordinary course of hearing, this is a castration of the soul, the soul becomes an eunuch, and we grow to a rust, to a moss, to a barrenness, without fruit, without propagation. If then God have placed thee under such a pastor, as presents thee variety, bless God, who enlarges himself, to afford thee that spiritual delight, in that variety; even for the satisfaction of that holy curiosity of thine. If he have placed thee under one, who often repeats, and often remembers thee of the same things, bless God even for that, that in that he hath let thee see, that the Christian religion is *verbum abbreviatum*, a contracted doctrine, and that they are but a few things which are necessary to salvation, and therefore be not loath to hear them often.

Our errand hither then, is not to see; but much less not to be able to see, to sleep: it is not to talk, but much less to snort: it is to hear, and to hear all the words of the preacher, but, to hear in those words, the word, that word which is the soul of all that is said, and is the true physic of all their souls that hear. *The word was made flesh;* that is, assumed flesh; but yet the Godhead was not that flesh. The word of God is made a sermon, that is, a text is dilated, diffused into a sermon; but that whole sermon is not the word of God. But yet all the sermon is the ordinance of God. *Delight thyself in the Lord, and he will give thee thy heart's desire;* take a delight in God's ordinance, in man's preaching, and thou wilt find God's word in that. To end all in that metaphor which we mentioned at beginning, as the word of God is as honey, so says Solomon, *Pleasant words are as the honeycomb*[24]: and when the pleasant words of God's servants have conveyed the saving word of God himself into thy soul, then mayest thou say with Christ to the spouse, *I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey*[25], mine understanding is enlightened with the words of the preacher, and my faith is strengthened with the word of God; I glorify God much in the gifts of the man, but I glorify God much more in the gifts of his grace; I

[24] Prov. xvi. 24. [25] Cant. v. 1.

am glad I have heard him, but I am gladder I have heard God in him; I am happy that I have heard those words, but thrice happy, that in those words, I have heard the word; blessed be thou that comest in the name of the Lord, but blessed be the Lord, that is come to me in thee; let me remember how the preacher said it, but let me remember rather what he said. And beloved, all the best of us all, all that all together, all the days of our life, shall be able to say unto you, is but this, that if ye will hear the same Jesus, in the same Gospel, by the same ordinance, and not seek an imaginary Jesus, in an illusory sacrifice, in another church, if you will hear so, as you have contracted with God in your baptism, the Holy Ghost shall fall upon you, whilst you hear, here in the house of God, and the Holy Ghost shall accompany you home to your own houses, and make your domestic peace there, a type of your union with God in heaven; and make your eating and drinking there, a type of the abundance, and fulness of heaven; and make every day's rising to you there, a type of your joyful resurrection to heaven; and every night's rest, a type of your eternal Sabbath; and your very dreams, prayers, and meditations, and sacrifices to Almighty God.

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## SERMON XXXII.

### *PREACHED UPON WHITSUNDAY.*

ROMANS viii. 16.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

I TAKE these words, to take occasion by them, to say something of the Holy Ghost: our order proposed at first, requires it, and our text affords it. Since we speak by him, let us love to speak of him, and to speak for him: but in both, to speak with him, that is, so, as he hath spoken of himself to us in the Scriptures. God will be visited, but he will not be importuned; he will be looked

upon, but he will not be pryed into. A man may flatter the best man; if he do not believe himself, when he speaks well of another, and when he praises him, though that which he says of him be true, yet he flatters; so an atheist, that temporizes, and serves the company, and seems to assent, flatters. A man may flatter the saints in heaven, if he attribute to them that which is not theirs; and so a papist flatters. A man may flatter God himself; if upon pretence of magnifying God's mercy, he will say with Origen, That God at last will have mercy upon the devil, he flatters. So, though God be our business, we may be too busy with God; and though God be infinite, we may go beyond God, when we conceive, or speak otherwise of God, than God hath revealed unto us. By his own light therefore we shall look upon him; and with that reverence, and modesty, that *That Spirit may bear witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

That which we shall say of these words, will best be conceived, and retained best, if we handle them thus; that whereas Christ hath bidden us to judge ourselves, that we be not judged, to admit a trial here, lest we incur a condemnation hereafter, this text is a good part of that trial, of that judicial proceeding. For, here are first, two persons that are able to say much, *The Spirit itself*, and *our spirit;* and secondly, their office, their service, *They bear witness;* and thirdly, their testimony, *That we are the children of God;* and these will be our three parts. The first will have two branches, because there are two persons, *the Spirit*, and *our spirit;* and the second, two branches, *they witness*, and *they witness together*, for so the word is; and the third also two branches, they testify of us, their testimony concerns us, and they testify well of us, *That we are the children of God.* The persons are without exception, the Spirit of God cannot be deceived, and the spirit of man will not deceive himself: their proceeding is legal, and fair, they do not libel, they do not whisper, they do not calumniate; they testify, and they agree in their testimony: and lastly, the case is not argued so, as amongst practisers at the law, that thereby, by the light of that, they may after give counsel to another in the like, but the testimony concerns ourselves, it is our own case, the verdict upon the testimony of the Spirit, and our spirit, is upon ourselves, whatsoever it be,

and, blessed be the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Ghost, the verdict is, *That we are the children of God. The Spirit beareth, &c.*

First then, a slackness, a supineness, in consideration of the divers significations of this word *spirit*, hath occasioned divers errors, when the word hath been intended in one sense, and taken in another. All the significations will fall into these four, for these four are very large; it is spoken of God, or of angels, or of men, or of inferior creatures. And first, of God, it is spoken sometimes essentially, sometimes personally. *God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth*[1]. So also, *The Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit*[2]; for, if they were God, they were spirit. So, God altogether, and considered in his essence, is a spirit: but when the word *spirit* is spoken, not essentially of all, but personally of one, then that word designeth *Spiritum Sanctum*, The Holy Ghost; *Go and baptize, in the name of the Father, and Son, et Spiritus Sancti, and the Holy Ghost*[3]. And as of God, so of angels also it is spoken in two respects; of good angels, *sent forth to minister for them, that shall be heirs of salvation*[4], and evil angels, *the lying spirit*[5], that would deceive the King by the prophet; *the spirit of whoredom*[6], spiritual whoredom, when the people ask counsel of their stocks, and *spiritus vertiginis, The spirit of giddiness, of perversities*[7], (as we translate it) which the Lord doth mingle amongst the people, in his judgment. Of man also, is this word spirit, spoken two ways; the spirit is sometimes the soul, *Into thy hands I commend my spirit*[8], sometimes it signifies those animal spirits, which conserve us in strength, and vigour, *The poison of God's arrows drinketh up my spirit*[9]; and also, the superior faculties of the soul in a regenerate man, as there, *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour*[10]. And then lastly, of inferior creatures it is taken two ways too, of living creatures, *The God of the spirits of all flesh*[11]; and of creatures without life, (other than a metapho-

[1] John iv. 24.
[2] Isaiah xxxi. 3.
[3] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[4] Heb. i. 14.
[5] 1 Kings xxii. 22.
[6] Hosea iv. 12.
[7] Isaiah xix. 3.
[8] Psalm xxxi. 5.
[9] Job vi. 4.
[10] Luke i. 47.
[11] Numb. xvi. 22.

rical life) as of the wind often, and of Ezekiel's wheels, *The spirit of life was in the wheels*[12]. Now in this first branch of this first part of our text, it is not of angels, nor of men, nor of other creatures, but of God, and not of God essentially, but personally, that is, of the Holy Ghost.

Origen says, the ancients before him had made this note, that where we find the word *spirit* without any addition, it is always intended of the *Holy Ghost*. Before him, and after him, they stuck much to that note; for St. Hierome makes it too, and produces many examples thereof; but yet it will not hold in all. Didymus of Alexandria, though born blind, in this light saw light, and writ so of the Holy Ghost, as St. Hierome thought that work worthy of his translation; and he gives this note, that wheresoever the apostles intend the *Holy Ghost*, they add to the word *Spirit*, *Sanctus*, *Holy Spirit*, or at least the article *the*, *the Spirit*. And this note hath good use too, but yet it is not universally true. If we supply these notes with this, that whensoever any such thing is said of the *Spirit*, as cannot consist with the Divine nature, there it is not meant of the Holy Ghost, but of his gifts, or of his working; (as, when it is said, *The Holy Ghost was not yet*[13], for his person was always, and where it is said, *Quench not the Holy Ghost*[14] (for the Holy Ghost himself cannot be quenched) we have enough for our present purpose. Here, it is *Spirit* without any addition, and therefore fittest to be taken for the *Holy Ghost;* and it is *Spirit*, with that emphatical article, *the*, *the Spirit*, and in that respect also fittest to be so taken. And though it be fittest to understand the Holy Ghost here, not of his person, but his operation, yet it gives just occasion to look piously, and to consider modestly, who, and what this person is, that doth thus work upon us. And to that purpose, we shall touch upon four things: first, his universality, he is all, he is God; secondly, his singularity, he is one, one person; thirdly, his root from whence he proceeded, Father and Son; and fourthly, his growth, his emanation, his manner of proceeding: for our order proposed at first, leading us now to speak of this third person of the Trinity, it will be almost necessary, to stop a little upon each of these.

[12] Ezek. i. 21. [13] John vii. 39. [14] 1 Thess. v. 19.

First then, the Spirit mentioned here, the Holy Ghost is God, and if so, equal to Father and Son, and all that is God. He is God, because the essential name of God is attributed to him; he is called Jehovah; *Jehovah says to Esay*[15], *Go and tell this people*, &c. And St. Paul making use of these words, in the Acts, he says[16], *Well spake the Holy Ghost, by the prophet Esay.* The essential name of God is attributed to him, and the essential attributes of God. He is eternal; so is none but God; where we hear of the making of everything else, in the general creation, we hear that *the Spirit of God moved*[17], but never that the Spirit was made. He is every where; so is none but God; *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit*[18]? He knows all things; so doth none but God; *The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*[19]. He hath the name of God, the attributes of God, and he does the works of God. Is our Creator, our Maker, God! *The Spirit of God hath made me*[20]. Is he that can change the whole creation, and frame of nature, in doing miracles, God! *The Spirit led the Israelites miraculously through the wilderness*[21]. Will the calling and the sending of the prophets, show him to be God? *The Lord God, and his Spirit hath sent me*[22]. Is it argument enough for his Godhead, that he sent Christ himself? Christ himself applies to himself that[23], *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and hath anointed me to preach.* He foretold future things, *The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spoke before*, says St. Peter[24]. He establishes present things, *The Spirit of truth guides into all truth*[25]. And he does this, by ways proper only to God; for, our illumination is his, *He shall receive of me*, (says Christ) *and show it you*[26]. Our justification is his; *Ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit of God*[27]. Our regeneration is his; there is a necessity of being *born again of water, and the Spirit*[28]. The holy sense of our natural wretchedness is his; for, *It is he, that reproves the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment*[29]. The sense of true comfort is his; *The churches*

[15] Isaiah vi. 9. [16] Acts xxviii. 25. [17] Gen. i. 2.
[18] Psal. cxxxix. 7. [19] 1 Cor. ii. 10. [20] Job xxxiii. 4.
[21] Isaiah lxiii. 14. [22] Isaiah xlviii. 16. [23] Isaiah lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18.
[24] Acts i. 16. [25] John xvi. 13. [26] Ver. 14.
[27] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [28] John iii. 5. [29] John xvi. 8.

*were multiplied in the comforts of the Holy Ghost*[30]. All from the creation to the resurrection, and the resurrection itself, is his; *The Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies, by the same Spirit*[31]. He is Arrha, the earnest that God gives to them now, to whom he will give all hereafter[32]. He is Sigillum, that seal of our evidence, *You are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*[33]. He is *the water, which whosoever drinks, shall never thirst, when Christ hath given it*[34]; and he is that fire, with which Christ baptizes, *who baptizes with fire, and with the Holy Ghost*[35]. *He is Spiritus precum*, the Spirit of grace, and supplication[36]; and he is *oleum lætitiæ*, the oil of gladness[37], that anoints us, when we have prayed. He is our advocate, *He maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*[38]; and when our groanings under the calamities of this world, are uttered without remedy, he is that Paracletus, the Comforter[39], who when Christ himself seems to be gone from us, comes to us; who is, (as Tertullian expresses it, elegantly enough, but not largely enough) *Dei Villicus, et Vicaria vis Christi*, the Vicegerent of Christ, and the Steward of God; but he is more, much more, infinitely more, for he is God himself. All that which St. John intends, in the *seven spirits*, which are about the throne, is in this *one*, in this only Spirit, who is *unicus et septiformis, solus et multiplex*[40]; one and yet seven, that is infinite; for, *Though there be diversity of gifts, yet there is but one Spirit*[41]. He is God, because the essential name of God is his; therefore let us call upon his name: and because the attributes of God are his; therefore let us attribute to him, all might, majesty, dominion, power, and glory: and he is God, because the works of God are his; therefore let us co-operate, and work with this spirit[42], and we shall be the same spirit with him.

He is God, that was our first step, and our second is, that he is a distinct person in the Godhead. He is not *Virtus à Deo in homine exaltata*, Not the highest and powerfulest working of God in man; Not *Afflatus Divinus*, The breathing of God into

[30] Acts ix. 31.
[31] Rom. viii. 11.
[32] 2 Cor. i. 22.
[33] Ep. i. 13.
[34] John iv. 14.
[35] Matt. iii. 11.
[36] Zach. xii. 10.
[37] Heb. i. 9.
[38] Rom. viii. 26.
[39] John xvi. 7.
[40] Augustine.
[41] 1 Cor. xii. 4.
[42] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

the soul of man; these are low expressions; for they are all but *Dona*, *Charismata*, The gifts of the Holy Ghost, not the Holy Ghost himself: but he is a distinct person, as the taking of the shape of a dove, and the shape of fiery tongues do declare, which are acts of a distinct person. It is not the power of the king, that signs a pardon, but his person. When the power of the government was in two persons, in the two consuls at Rome, yet the several acts were done by their several persons. Wilt thou ask me, what needs these three persons? Is there anything in the three persons, that is not in the one God? Yes, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, falls not in the bare consideration of that one God. Wilt thou say, What if they do not? What lack we if we have one Almighty God? Though that God had no Son, nor they two, no Holy Ghost? We lacked our redemption; we lacked all our direction; we lacked the revealed will of God, the Scriptures; we have not God, if we have him not, as he hath delivered himself; and he hath done that in the Scriptures; and we embrace him, as we find him there; and we find him there, to be one God in three persons, and the Holy Ghost to be one of those three; and in them we rest.

He is one; but one that proceeds from two, from the Father, and from the Son. Some in the Greek church, in later times, denied the proceeding of the Holy Ghost from the Son; but this was especially a jealousy in terms; they thought that to make him proceed from two, were to make *duo principia*, two roots, two beginnings from whence the Holy Ghost should proceed, and that might not be admitted, for the Father, and the Son are but one cause of the Holy Ghost, (if we may use that word, cause, in this mystery). And therefore it is as suspiciously, and as dangerously said by the master of the sentences, and by the later school, that the Holy Ghost proceeds *minùs principaliter*, not so radically from the Son, as from the Father; for, in this action, the Father and the Son are but one root, and the Holy Ghost equally from both: in the generation of the Son, the Father is in order before the Son, but in the procession of the Holy Ghost, he is not so. He is from both; for where he is first named[43], he is called *Spiritus Elohim*, *The Spirit of Gods*, in the

[43] Gen. i. 2.

plural. In this chapter, in the ninth verse, he is the Spirit of the Son, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;* and so in the apostle, *God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*[44]. God sent him, and Christ sent him, *If I depart, I will send the Comforter unto you*[45]. He sent him after he went, and he gave him when he was here, *He breathed upon his apostles, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost*[46]. So he is of both.

But by what manner comes he from them? By proceeding. That is a very general word; for creation is proceeding, and so is generation too: creatures proceed from God, and so doth God the Son proceed from God the Father; what is this proceeding of the Holy Ghost, that is not creation, nor generation? *Exponant cur et quomodo spiritus pulsat in arteriis, et tum in processionem Spiritus Sancti inquirant*[47]: When they are able clearly, and with full satisfaction to tell themselves how and from whence that spirit proceeds, which beats in their pulse, let them inquire how this Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. And let them think till they be mad, and speak till they be hoarse, and read till they be blind, and write till they be lame, they must end with St. Augustine, *Distinguere inter processionem, et generationem, nescio, non valeo, non sufficio*, I cannot distinguish, I cannot assign a difference between this generation, and this proceeding. We use to say, they differ *principio*, that the Son is from the Father alone, the Holy Ghost from both: but when this is said, that must be said too, that both Father and Son are but one beginning. We use to say, they differ *ordine*, because the Son is the second, and the Holy Ghost the third person; but the second was not before the third in time, nor is above him in dignity.

There is *processio corporalis*, such a bodily proceeding, as that that which proceeds is utterly another thing than that from which it proceeds: frogs proceed (perchance) of air, and mice of dust, and worms of carcasses; and they resemble not that air, that dust, those carcasses that produced them. There is also

[44] Gal. iv. 6.
[45] John xvi. 17.
[46] John xx. 22.
[47] Nazianz.

*processio metaphysica*, when thoughts proceed out of the mind; but those thoughts remain still in the mind within, and have no separate subsistence in themselves: and then there is *processio hyperphysica*, which is this which we seek and find in our souls, but not in our tongues, a proceeding of the Holy Ghost so from Father and Son, as that he remains a subsistence alone, a distinct person of himself. This is as far as the school can reach, *ortu, qui relationis est, non est a se; actu, qui personæ est, per se subsistit:* consider him in his proceeding, so he must necessarily have a relation to another, consider him actually in his person, so he subsists of himself. And *de modo*, for the manner of his proceeding, we need, we can say but this, as the Son proceeds *per modum intellectus*, (so as the mind of man conceives a thought) so the Holy Ghost proceeds *per modum voluntatis;* when the mind hath produced a thought, that mind, and that discourse and ratiocination produce a will; first our understanding is settled, and that understanding leads our will. And nearer than this (though God knows this be far off) we cannot go, to the proceeding of the Holy Ghost.

This then is *the Spirit*, the third person in the Trinity, but the first person in our text, the other is our spirit, *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit.* I told you before, that amongst the manifold acceptations of the word *spirit*, as it hath relation particularly to man, it is either the soul itself, or the vital spirits, (the thin and active parts of the blood) or the superior faculties of the soul, in a regenerate man; and that is *our spirit*, in this place. So St. Paul distinguishes soul and spirit, *The word of God pierces to the dividing asunder soul and spirit*[48]; where the soul is that which inanimates the body, and enables the organs of the senses to see and hear; the spirit is that which enables the soul to see God, and to hear his Gospel. The same phrase hath the same use in another place, *I pray God your spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless*[49]: where it is not so absurdly said, (though a very great man[50] call it an absurd exposition) that the soul, *anima*, is that, *qua animales homines*, (as the apostle calls them) that by which men are men, natural men, carnal men;

[48] Heb. iv. 12. [49] 1 Thes. v. 25. [50] Calvin.

and the spirit is the spirit of regeneration, by which man is a new creature, a spiritual man; but that expositor himself hath said enough to our present purpose, the soul is the seat of affections, the spirit is rectified reason. It is true, this reason is the sovereign, these affections are the officers, this body is the executioner: reason authorizes, affections command, the body executes: and when we conceive in our mind, desire in our heart, perform in our body nothing that displeases God, then have we had benefit of St. Paul's prayer, *That in body, and soul, and spirit we may be blameless.* In some, we need seek no farther for a word to express this *spirit*, but that which is familiar to us, *the conscience:* a rectified conscience is this spirit; *My conscience bearing me witness*, says the apostle[51]: and so we have both the persons in this judicial proceeding; *the spirit* is the Holy Ghost; *our spirit* is our conscience; and now their office is to testify, to bear witness, which is our second general part, *The Spirit bears witness*, &c.

To be a witness, is not an unworthy office for the Holy Ghost himself: heretics in their pestilent doctrines, tyrants in their bloody persecutions, call God himself so often, so far into question, as that it needs strong and pregnant testimony to acquit him. First, against heretics, we see the whole Scripture is but a testament; and *testamentum* is *testatio mentis*, it is but an attestation, a proof what the will of God is: and therefore when Tertullian deprehended himself to have slipped into another word, and to have called the Bible *Instrumentum*, he retracts and corrects himself thus, *Magis usui est dicere testamentum quam instrumentum*, It is more proper to call the Scripture a Testament, than a conveyance or covenant: all the Bible is testament, attestation, declaration, proof, evidence of the will of God to man. And those *two witnesses* spoken of in the Revelation[52], are very conveniently, very probably interpreted to be the two Testaments; and to the Scriptures Christ himself refers the Jews, *Search them, for they bear witness of me*[53]. The word of God written by the Holy Ghost is a witness, and so the Holy Ghost is a witness against heretics. Against tyrants and persecutors, the office of a witness is an honourable office too; for that

[51] Rom. ix. 1. [52] Rev. xi. 2. [53] John v. 39.

which we call more passionately, and more gloriously martyrdom, is but testimony; a martyr is nothing but a witness. He that pledges Christ in his own wine, in his own cup, in blood; he that washes away his sins in a second baptism, and hath found a lawful way of re-baptizing, even in blood; he that waters the prophet's ploughing, and the apostle's sowing with blood; he that can be content to bleed as long as a tyrant can foam, or an executioner sweat; he that is pickled, nay embalmed in blood, salted with fire, and preserved in his own ashes; he that (to contract all, nay to enlarge beyond all) suffers in the inquisition, when his body is upon the rack, when the rags are in his throat, when the boots are upon his legs, when the splinters are under his nails, if in those agonies he have the vigour to say, I suffer this to show what my Saviour suffered, must yet make this difference, he suffered as a Saviour, I suffer but as a witness. But yet to him that suffers as a martyr, as a witness, a crown is reserved; it is a happy and a harmonious meeting in Stephen's martyrdom; *proto-martyr*, and *Stephanus;* that the first martyr for Christ should have a crown in his name. Such a blessed meeting there is in Joash his coronation, *Posuit super eum diadema et testimonium, They put the crown upon his head, and the testimony*[54]; that is, the law, which testified, that as he had the crown from God, so he had it with a witness, with an obligation, that his government, his life, and (if need were) his death should testify his zeal to him that gave him that crown.

Thus the Holy Ghost himself is a witness against heretics in the word; and those men who are full of the Holy Ghost (as Stephen was) are witnesses against persecution, in action, in passion. At this time, and by occasion of these words, we consider principally the first, the testification of the Holy Ghost himself; and therein we consider thus much more, that a witness ever testifies of some matter of fact, of something done before; the Holy Ghost, the Spirit here, (as we shall see anon) witnesses that we are the children of God. Now if a witness prove that I am a tenant to such land, or lord of it, I do not become lord nor tenant by this witness, but his testimony proves that I was so before. I have therefore a former right to be the child of God,

[54] 2 Kings ii. 12.

that is, the eternal election of God in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus could as well have disobeyed his Father, and said, I will not go, or disappointed his Father, and said, I will not go yet, as he could have disfurnished his Father, and said, He would not redeem me. The Holy Ghost bears witness, that is, he pleads, he produces that eternal decree for my election. And upon such evidence shall I give sentence against myself? *Si testaretur angelus, vel archangelus, posset quisquam addubitare*[55]? I should not doubt the testimony of an angel, or archangel, and yet angels and archangels, all sorts of angels were deceivers in the serpent. And therefore the apostle presents it (though impossible in itself) as a thing that might fall into our mis-apprehension: *If we*, (that is the apostles) *or if an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel, anathema sit, let him be accursed*[56]. But *quando Deus testatur, quis locus relinquitur dubitationi?* when God testifies to me, it is a rebellious sin to doubt: and therefore how hyperbolically soever St. Paul argue there, If apostles, if angels teach the contrary, teach false doctrine, it never entered into his argument (though an argument *ab impossibili*) to say, if God should teach, or testify false doctrine. Though then there be a former evidence for my being the child of God, a decree in heaven, yet it is not enough that there is such a record, but it must be produced, it must be pleaded, it must be testified to be that, it must have the witness of the Spirit, and by that, *innotescit*, though it do not become my election then, it makes my election appear then, and though it be not introductory, it is declaratory. The root is in the decree, the first fruits are in the testimony of the Spirit; but even that spirit will not be *testis singularis*, he will not be heard alone, and single, but it is *cum Spiritu nostro, The Spirit testifies with our spirit*, &c.

The Holy Ghost will fulfil his own law, *In ore duorum, In the mouth of two witnesses.* Sometimes our spirit bears witness of some things appertaining to the next world, without the testimony of the Holy Ghost. Tertullian in that excellent book of his, *De testimonio animæ*, Of the testimony which the soul of man gives of itself to itself, where he speaks of the soul of a natural, an unregenerate man, gives us just occasion to stop a

[55] Chrysostom. [56] Gal. i. 8.

little upon that consideration. If, says he, we for our religion produce your own authors against you, (he speaks to natural men, secular philosophers) and show you out of them, what passions, what vices even they impute to those whom you have made your gods, then you say, they were but *poetæ vani*, those authors were but vain, and frivolous poets: but when those authors speak anything which sounds against our religion, then they are philosophers, and reverend and classic authors. And therefore, says he, I will draw no witness from them, *Perversæ felicitatis, quibus in falso potius creditur, quam in vero*, Because they have this perverse, this left-handed happiness, to be believed when they lie, better than when they say true. *Novum testimonium adduco*, says he; I waive all them, and I call upon a new witness: a witness, *omni literaturæ notius*, more legible than any character, than any text-hand, for it is the intimation of my own soul, and conscience; and *omni editione vulgatius*, more public, more conspicuous than any addition, any impression of any author, for editions may be called in, but who can call in the testimony of his own soul? He proceeds, *Te simplicem, et idioticum compello*, I require but a simple, an unlearned soul, *Qualem te habent, qui te solam habent*, Such a soul, as that man hath, who hath nothing but a soul, no learning; *Imperitia tua mihi opus est, quoniam aliquantulæ peritiæ tuæ nemo credit;* I shall have the more use of thy testimony, the more ignorant thou art, for, in such cases, art is suspicious, and from them who are able to prove anything, we believe nothing: and therefore, says he, *Nolo academiis, bibliothecis instructam*, I call not a soul made in an university, or nursed in a library, but let this soul come now, as it came to me in my mother's womb, an inartificial, an inexperienced soul; and then, to (contract Tertullian's contemplation) he proceeds to show the notions of the Christian religion, which are in such a soul naturally, and which his spirit, that is, his rectified reason, rectified but by nature, is able to infuse into him. And certainly some of that, which is proved by the testimony, mentioned in this text, is proved by the testimony of our own natural soul, in that poet whom the apostle cites, that said, *We are the off-spring of God*[57].

[57] Acts xvii. 28.

So then our spirit bears witness sometimes when the Spirit does not; that is, nature testifies some things, without addition of particular grace: and then the Spirit, the Holy Ghost oftentimes testifies, when ours does not: How often stands he at the door, and knocks? How often spreads he his wings, to gather us, as a hen her chickens? How often presents he to us the power of God in the mouth of the preacher, and we bear witness to one another of the wit and of the eloquence of the preacher, and no more? How often he bears witness, that such an action is odious in the sight of God, and our spirit bears witness, that it is acceptable, profitable, honourable in the sight of man? How often he bears witness, for God's judgments, and our spirit deposes for mercy, by presumption, and how often he testifies for mercy, and our spirit swears for judgment, in desperation? But when the Spirit, and our spirit agree in their testimony, that he hath spoke comfortably to my soul, and my soul hath apprehended comfort by that speech, that, (to use Christ's similitude) *He hath piped, and we have danced*, he hath showed me my Saviour, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, he deposes for the decree of my election, and I depose for the seals and marks of that decree, these two witnesses, *the Spirit*, and *my spirit*, induce a third witness, the world itself, to testify that which is the testimony of this text, *That I am the child of God.* And so we pass from the two former parts, the persons, the Spirit, and our spirit, and their office, to witness, and to agree in their witness, and we are fallen into our third part, the testimony itself, *That we are the children of God.*

This part hath also two branches; first, that the testimony concerns ourselves, *We are*, and then, that that which we are is this, *We are the children of God.* And in the first branch, there will be two twigs, two sub-considerations; *we*, a personal appropriation of the grace of God to ourselves, *We are*, we are now, a present possession of those graces. First, consider we the consolation in the particle of appropriation, *We.* In the great ant-hill of the whole world, I am an ant; I have my part in the creation, I am a creature; but there are ignoble creatures. God comes nearer; in the great field of clay, of red earth, that man was made of, and mankind, I am a clod; I am a man, I have my

part in the humanity; but man was worse than annihilated again. When Satan in that serpent was come, as Hercules with his club into a potter's shop, and had broke all the vessels, destroyed all mankind, and the gracious promise of a Messiah to redeem all mankind, was shed and spread upon all, I had my drop of that dew of heaven, my spark of that fire of heaven, in the universal promise, in which I was involved; but this promise was appropriated after, in a particular covenant, to one people, to the Jews, to the seed of Abraham. But for all that, I have my portion there; for all that profess Christ Jesus are by a spiritual engrafting, and transmigration, and transplantation, in and of that stock, and that seed of Abraham; and I am one of those. But then, of those who do profess Christ Jesus, some grovel still in the superstitions they were fallen into, and some are raised, by God's good grace, out of them; and I am one of those; God hath afforded me my station, in that church, which is departed from Babylon.

Now, all this while, my soul is in a cheerful progress; when I consider what God did for Goshen in Egypt, for a little park in the midst of a forest; what he did for Jewry, in the midst of enemies, as a shire that should stand out against a kingdom round about it: how many Sancerras he hath delivered from famines, how many Genevas from plots, and machinations against her, all this while my soul is in a progress: but I am at home, when I consider bulls of excommunications, and solicitations of rebellions, and pistols, and poisons, and the discoveries of those; there is our *nos*, *we*, testimonies that we are in the favour, and care of God; we, our nation, we, our church; there I am at home; but I am in my cabinet at home, when I consider, what God hath done for me, and my soul; there is the *ego*, the particular, the individual, I. This appropriation is the consolation, *We are;* But who are they? or how are we of them? *Testimonium est clamor ipse*, says St. Chrysostom to our great advantage, Even this, that we are able *to cry Abba, Father, by the Spirit of adoption*[58], is this testimony, *that we are his children;* if we can truly do that, that testifies for us. The Spirit testifies two ways; directly, expressly, personally, as in that, *Man, thy sins are*

[58] Ver. 15.

*forgiven thee*[59], and so to David by Nathan, *Transtulit, The Lord hath taken away thy sin;* and then he testifies, *per indicia*, by constant marks, and infallible evidences. We are not to look for the first, for it is a kind of revelation; nor are we to doubt of the second, for the marks are infallible. And therefore, as St. Augustine said of the Manichees, concerning the Scriptures, *Insani sunt adversus antidotum, quo sani esse possunt*, They are enraged against that, which only can cure them of their rage, that was, the Scriptures; so there are men, which will still be in ignorance of that which might cure them of their ignorance, because they will not labour to find in themselves, the marks and seals of those who are ordained to salvation, they will needs think, that no man can have any such testimony.

They say, It is true, there is a blessed comfort, in this appropriation, if we could be sure of it; they may; we are; we are already in possession of it. The marks of our spiritual filiation, are less subject to error, than of temporal. Shall the mother's honesty be the evidence? Alas, we have some such examples of their falsehood, as will discredit any argument, built merely upon their truth. He is like the father; is that the evidence? Imagination may imprint those characters: he hath his land; a supposititious child may have that. Spiritual marks are not so fallible as these: they have so much in them, as creates even a knowledge, *Now we are the sons of God, and we know that we shall be like him; and we know, that we are of God*[60]. Is all this but a conjectural knowledge, but a moral certitude? No tincture of faith in it? Can I acquire, and must I bring *certitudinem fidei*, an assurance out of faith, that a council cannot err; and then, such another faithful assurance, that the Council of Trent was a true council; and then another, that the Council of Trent did truly and duly proceed in all ways essential to the truth of a council, in constituting their decree against this doctrine? And may I not bring this assurance of faith to St. Paul, and St. John when they say the contrary? Is not St. Paul's *sumus*, and St. John's *scimus*, as good a ground for our faith, as the servile and mercenary voices of a herd of new pensionary bishops, shovelled together at Trent for that purpose, are for the contrary?

[59] Luke v. 20. [60] 1 John iii. 2; v. 19.

A particular bishop in the Roman church[61], cites an universal bishop, a pope himself in this point, and he says well, *Legem credendi statuit lex supplicandi*, Whatsoever we may pray for, we may, we must believe *Certitudine fidei*, With an assurance of faith; if I may pray, and say *Pater noster*, if I may call God Father, I may believe with a faithful assurance, that I am the child of God. *Stet invicta pauli sententia*, Let the apostle's doctrine, says that bishop, remain unshaked; *Et velut sagitta*, says he, This doctrine, as an arrow shot at them, will put out their eyes that think to see beyond St. Paul. It is true, says that bishop, there are differences amongst Catholics themselves in this point; and then, why do they charge us, whom they defame, by the name of heretics, with beginning this doctrine, which was amongst themselves before we were at all, if they did date us aright? *Attestatur Spiritus, et ei damus fidem, et inde certi sumus*, says that bishop: The Holy Ghost bears witness, and our spirit with him, and thereby we are sure: but, says he, they will needs make a doubt whether this be a knowledge out of faith; which doubt, says he, *Secum fert absurditatem*, There is an absurdity, a contradiction in the very doubt: *Ex Spiritu Sancto, et humana?* Is it a knowledge from the Holy Ghost, and is it not a divine knowledge then? But, say they, (as that bishop presses their objections) the Holy Ghost doth not make them know, that it is the Holy Ghost that assures them; this is, says he, as absurd as the other; for, *Nisi se testantem insinuet, non testatur*, Except he make them discern, that he is a witness, he is no witness to them: he ends it thus, *Sustinere coguntur quod excidit;* and that is indeed their case, in very many things controverted; then when it conduced to their advantage in argument, or to their profit in purse, such and such things fell from them, and now that opposition is made against such sayings of theirs, their profit lies at stake, and their reputation too, to make good, and to maintain that which they have once, how indiscreetly soever, said. Some of their severest later men, even of their Jesuits[62], acknowledge that we may know ourselves to be the children of God, with as good a knowledge, as that there is a Rome, or a Constantinople, and such an assurance as delivers them from all fear that they

[61] Catarinus. [62] Vegas. Pererius.

shall fall away; and is not this more than that assurance which we take to ourselves? We give no such assurance as may occasion security, or slackness in the service of God, and they give such an assurance as may remove all fear and suspicion of falling from God.

It was truly good counsel in St. Gregory, when, writing to one of the empresses bedchamber, a religious lady of his own name, who had written to him, that she should never leave importuning him, till he sent her word, that he had received a revelation from God that she was saved: for, says he, *Rem difficilem postulas, et inutilem*, It is a hard matter you require, and an impertinent, and useless matter: for I am not a man worthy to receive revelations, and besides, such a revelation as you require, might make you too secure: and *Mater negligentiæ solet esse securitas*, (says he) Such a security might make you negligent in those duties which should make sure your salvation. St. Augustine felt the witness of *the Spirit*, but not of *his spirit*, when he stood out so many solicitations of the Holy Ghost, and deferred and put off the outward means, his baptism. In that state, when he had a disposition to baptism, he says of himself, *Infervui exultando, sed inhorrui timendo;* Still I had a fervent joy in me, because I saw the way to thee, and intended to put myself into that way, but yet, because I was not yet in it, I had a trembling, a jealousy, a suspicion of myself. *Insinuati sunt mihi in profundo nutus tui*, In that half-darkness, in that twilight I discerned thine eye to be upon me; *Et gaudens in fide, laudavi nomen tuum*, And this, says he, created a kind of faith, a confidence in me, and this induced an inward joy, and that produced a praising of thy goodness, *Sed ea fides securum me non esse sinebat*, But all this did not imprint, and establish that security, that assurance which I found as soon as I came to the outward seals, and marks, and testimonies of thine inseparable presence with me, in thy baptism, and other ordinances. St. Bernard puts the marks of as much assurance, as we teach, in these words of our Saviour, *Surge, tolle grabatum, et ambula*, *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. Surge ad divina*, Raise thy thoughts upon the next world; *Tolle corpus, ut non te ferat, sed tu illud*, Take up thy body, bring thy body into thy power, that thou govern it, and not it thee; and then, *Ambula*,

*non retrospicias*, Walk on, proceed forward, and look not back with a delight upon thy former sins: and a great deal an elder man than Bernard[63], expresses it well, *Bene viventibus perhibet testimonium, quod jam sumus filii Dei*, To him that lives according to a right faith, the Spirit testifies that he is now the child of God, *Et quod talia faciendo, perseverabimus in ea filiatione*, He carries this testimony thus much farther, that if we endeavour to continue in that course, we shall continue in that state, of being the children of God, and never be cast off, never disinherited. Herein is our assurance, an election there is; the Spirit bears witness to our spirit, that it is ours; we testify this in a holy life; and the church of God, and the whole world joins in this testimony, *That we are the children of God;* which is our last branch, and conclusion of all.

The Holy Ghost could not express more danger to a man, than when he calls him *Filium sæculi, The child of this world*[64]; nor a worse disposition, than when he calls him, *Filium diffidentiæ, The child of diffidence, and distrust in God*[65]; nor a worse pursuer of that ill disposition, than when he calls him *Filium diaboli*, (as St. Peter calls Elymas) *The child of the devil*[66]; nor a worse possessing of the devil, than when he calls him *Filium perditionis, The child of perdition*[67]; nor a worse execution of all this, than when he calls him *Filium gehennæ, The child of hell*[68]: the child of this world, the child of desperation, the child of the devil, the child of perdition, the child of hell, is a high expressing, a deep aggravating of his damnation; that his damnation is not only his purchase, as he hath acquired it, but it is his inheritance, he is the child of damnation. So is it also a high exaltation, when the Holy Ghost draws our pedigree from any good thing, and calls us the children of that: as, when he calls us *Filios lucis, The children of light*[69], that we have seen the day-star arise, when he calls us *Filios sponsi, The children of the bridechamber*[70], begot in lawful marriage upon the true church, these are fair approaches to the highest title of all, to be *Filii Dei, The children of God;* and not children of God, *per filiationem vestigii*, (so

[63] Remigius. [64] Luke xvi. 18. [65] Ephes. v. 6.
[66] Acts xiii. 10. [67] John xvii. [68] Matt. xxiii. 15.
[69] John xii. 36. [70] Matt. ix. 15.

every creature is a child of God) by having an image, and impression of God, in the very being thereof, but *children* so, as that we are *heirs*, and *heirs* so, as that we are *co-heirs with Christ*, as it follows in the next verse, and is implied in this name, *Children of God.*

Heirs of heaven, which is not a gavel-kind, every son, every man alike; but it is an universal primogeniture, every man full, so full, as that every man hath all, in such measure, as that there is nothing in heaven, which any man in heaven wants. Heirs of the joys of heaven; joy in a continual dilatation of thy heart, to receive augmentation of that which is infinite, in the accumulation of essential and accidental joy. Joy in a continual melting of indissoluble bowels, in joyful, and yet compassionate beholding thy Saviour; rejoicing at thy being there, and almost lamenting (in a kind of affection, which we can call by no name) that thou couldst not come thither, but by those wounds, which are still wounds, though wounds glorified. Heirs of the joy, and heirs of the glory of heaven; where if thou look down, and see kings fighting for crowns, thou canst look off as easily, as from boys at stool-ball for points here; and from kings triumphing after victories, as easily, as a philosopher from a pageant of children here. Where thou shalt not be subject to any other title of dominion in others, but *Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews*, nor ambitious of any other title in thyself, but that which thou possessest, *To be the child of God.* Heirs of joy, heirs of glory, and heirs of the eternity of heaven; where, in the possession of this joy, and this glory, the angels which were there almost six thousand years before thee, and so prescribe, and those souls which shall come at Christ's last coming, and so enter but then, shall not survive thee, but they, and thou, and all, shall live as long as he that gives you all that life, as God himself.

Heirs to heaven, and co-heirs with Christ: there is much to be said of that circumstance; but who shall say it? I that should say it, have said ill of it already, in calling it a circumstance. To be co-heirs with Christ, is that essential salvation itself; and to that he entitled us, when after his resurrection he said of us, *Go tell my brethren that I am gone*[71]. When he was

[71] John xx. 17.

but born of a woman, and submitted to the law, when in his minority, he was but a carpenter, and at full age, but a preacher, when they accused him in general, that he was a malefactor, or else they would not have delivered him[72], but they knew not the name of his fault, when a fault of secular cognizance was objected to him, that he moved sedition, that he denied tribute, and then a fault of ecclesiastical cognizance, that he spoke against the law, and against the temple, when Barabbas a seditious murderer was preferred before him, and saved, and yet two thieves left to accompany him, in his torment and death, in these diminutions of Christ, there was no great honour, no great cause why any man should have any great desire to be of his kindred; to be brother, or co-heir to his cross. But if to be his brethren, when he had begun his triumph in his resurrection, were a high dignity, what is it to be co-heirs with him in heaven, after his ascension? But these are inexpressible, inconceivable things; bring it back to that which is nearest us; to those seals and marks which we have in this life; that by a holy, a sanctified passage through this life, and out of this life, from our first seal in baptism, to our last seal upon our death-bed, *The Spirit may bear witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God.* *Amen.*

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## SERMON XXXIII.

### *PREACHED UPON WHITSUNDAY.*

MATTHEW xii. 31.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

As when a merchant hath a fair and large, a deep and open sea, into that harbour to which he is bound with his merchandise, it were an impertinent thing for him, to sound, and search for lands,

[72] John xviii. 30.

and rocks, and cliffs, which threaten irreparable shipwreck; so we being bound to the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, by the spacious and bottomless sea, the blood of Christ Jesus, having that large sea opened unto us, in the beginning of this text, *All manner of sin, and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men*, it may seem an impertinent diversion, to turn into that little creek, nay upon that desperate, and irrecoverable rock, *The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven to men.* But there must be discoverers, as well as merchants; for the security of merchants, who by storm and tempest, or other accidents, may be cast upon those sands, and rocks, if they be not known, they must be known. So though we sail on, with a merry gale and full sails, with the breath of the Holy Ghost in the first part, *All manner of sin, and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men*, yet we shall not leave out the discovery of that fearful and ruinating rock too, *But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*

I would divide the text; and fewer parts than two, we cannot make, and this text hath scarce two parts: the whole text is a conveyance, it is true; but there is a little proviso at the end: the whole text is a rule, it is true; but there is an exception at the end; the whole text is a royal palace, it is true; but there is a sewer, a vault behind it; Christ had said all that of himself he would have said, when he said the first part, *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men*, but the iniquity of the Pharisees extorted thus much more, *But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men:* the first part is the sentence, the proposition, and the sense is perfect in that, *All manner of sin*, &c. The last part is but a *parenthesis*, which Christ had rather might have been left out, but the Pharisees, and their perverseness inserted, *But the blasphemy*, &c. But since it deserves, and requires our consideration, as well, that the mercy of God can have any stop, any rub, determine any where, as that it can extend, and spread itself so far, as it doth in this text, let us make them two parts: and in the first consider with comfort, the largeness, the expansion of God's mercy, that there is but one sin, that it reacheth not to; and in the second let us consider with fear, and trembling, that there is one sin, so swell-

ing, so high, as that even the mercy of God does not reach to it. And in the first we shall proceed thus, in the magnifying God's mercy, first, in the first term, *sin*, we shall see that sin is even a wound, a violence upon God; and then *Omne peccatum*, Every sin is so; and nothing is so various, so diverse as sin; and even that sin, that amounts to *blasphemy*, a sin not only conceived in the thought, but expressed in contumelious words; and those contumelious and blasphemous words uttered against *the Son*, (for so it is expressed in the very next verse) all this *shall be forgiven:* but yet it is *in futuro*, *They shall be:* no man's sins are forgiven him, then when he sins them; but by repentance they shall be forgiven; *forgiven unto men;* that is, first, unto any man, and then, unto none but men; for the sin of the angels shall never be forgiven: and these will be the branches of the first part. And in the second part, we shall look as far as this text occasions it, upon that debated sin, *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, and *the irremissibleness of that;* of which part, we shall derive and raise the particular branches anon, when we come to handle them.

First then, for the first term, *sin*, we use to ask in the school, whether any action of man's can have *rationem demeriti*, whether it can be said to offend God, or to deserve ill of God: for whatsoever does so, must have some proportion with God. With things which are inanimate, things that have no will, and so no good nor bad purpose, as dust, or the wind, or such, a man cannot properly be so offended, as to say that they deserve ill of him. With those things which have no use, no command of their will, as children, and fools, and madmen, it is so too; and then, there is no creature so poor, so childish, so impotent, in respect of man, as the best man is in respect of God: how then can he sin, that is, offend, that is, deserve ill of him? The question begun not in the school; it was asked before of Job[1]: *If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art;* but what is it to God? For, as Gregory says upon that place, *Humana impietas ei nocet, quem pervertendo inquinat*, Our sins hurt them, whom our example leads into temptation; but our sins cannot draw God to be accessory to our sins, or to

[1] Job xxxv. 6.

make him sin with us. Our sin cannot hurt him so; nor hurt him directly any way; not his person; but his subjects, whom he hath taken into his protection, it may; his law, which he hath given for direction, it may; his honour, of which he is jealous, which honour consists much in our honouring of him, it may. Wherein is a king's person violated, by coining a false penny, or counterfeiting a seal? And yet this is treason. God cannot be robbed, he cannot be damnified; whatsoever is taken from him (and there is a sacrilege in all unjust takings) wheresoever it be laid, he sees it, and it is still in his possession, and in his house, and in his hands. God cannot be robbed, nor God cannot be violated, he cannot be wounded, for he hath no limbs. But God is *Ultimus finis*, The end to which we all go, and his law is the way to that end; and *Transilire lineam*, To transgress that law, to leave that way, is a neglecting of him: and even negligences, and pretermissions, and slightings, are as great offences, as actual injuries. So God is *communis Pater*, the Father of all creatures; and so the abuse of the creature reflects upon God, as the injuries done to the children, do upon the parents.

If then we can sin so against God, as we can against the king, and against the law, and against propriety, and against parents; we have ways enow of sinning against God. Sin is not therefore so absolutely nothing, as that it is (in no consideration) other than a privation, only *absentia recti*, and nothing at all in itself: but, not to enter farther into that inextricable point, we rest in this, that sin is *actus inordinatus*, it is not only an obliquity, a privation, but it is an action deprived of that rectitude, which it should have; it does not only want that rectitude, but it should have that rectitude, and therefore hath a sinful want. We shall not dare to call sin merely, absolutely nothing, if we consider either the punishment due to sin, or the pardon of that punishment, or the price of that pardon. The punishment is everlasting; why should I believe it to be so? *Os Domini locutum*, The mouth of the Lord hath said it. But why should it be so? *Justum est ut qui in suo æterno peccavit contra Deum, in Dei æterno puniatur*[s], It is but justice, that he that sins in his eternity, should be punished in God's eternity: now to sin in our eternity, is to sin as long as

[s] Gregory.

we live, and if we could live eternally, to desire to sin eternally. God can cut off our eternity, he can shorten our life; if we could cut off his eternity, and quench hell, our punishment were not eternal. We consider sin to be *quoddam infinitum;* as it is an aversion from God, who is infinite goodness, it is an infinite thing: and as it is a turning upon the creature, it is finite, and determined; for all pleasure taken in the creature, is so: and accordingly sin hath a finite, and an infinite punishment: that which we call *pœnum sensus*, the torment which we feel, is not infinite; (otherwise, than by duration) for that torment is not equal in all the damned, and that which is infinite must necessarily be equal; but that which we call *pœnam damni*, the everlasting loss of the sight of the everliving God, that is infinite, and alike, and equal in all the damned. Sin is something then, if we consider the punishment; and so it is, if we consider our deliverance from this punishment: that which God could not pardon in the way of justice without satisfaction, that for which nothing could be a satisfaction, but the life of all men, or of one man worth all, the Son of God, that that tore the Son out of the arms of his Father, in the *Quid dereliquisti*, when he cried out, Why hast thou forsaken me? That which imprinted in him, who was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, a deadly heaviness, in his *tristis anima*, when his soul was heavy unto death, that which had power to open heaven in his descent hither, and to open hell, in his descent thither, to open the womb of the Virgin in his incarnation, and the womb of the earth in his resurrection, that which could change the frame of nature in miracles, and the God of nature in becoming man, that that deserved that punishment, that that needed that ransom (say the schoolmen what they will of privations) cannot be merely, absolutely nothing, but the greatest thing that can be conceived; and yet that shall be forgiven.

That, and all that; *sin*, and *all sin;* and there is not so much of anything in the world, as of sin. Every virtue hath two extremes, two vices opposed to it; there is two to one; but Abraham's task was an easy task to tell the stars of heaven; so it were to tell the sands, or hairs, or atoms, in respect of telling but our own sins. And will God say to me, *Confide fili*, *My son*,

*be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*[3]? Does he mean all my sins? He knows what original sin is, and I do not; and will he forgive me sin in that root, and sin in the branches, original sin, and actual sin too? He knows my secret sins, and I do not; will he forgive my manifest sins, and those sins too? He knows my relapses into sins repented; and will he forgive my faint repentances, and my rebellious relapses after them? Will his mercy dive into my heart, and forgive my sinful thoughts there, and shed upon my lips, and forgive my blasphemous words there, and bathe the members of this body, and forgive mine unclean actions there? Will he contract himself into himself, and meet me there, and forgive my sins against himself, and scatter himself upon the world, and forgive my sins against my neighbour, and imprison himself in me, and forgive my sins against myself? Will he forgive those sins, wherein my practice hath exceeded my parents, and those wherein my example hath misled my children? Will he forgive that dim sight which I have of sin now, when sins scarce appear to be sins unto me, and will he forgive that over-quick sight, when I shall see my sins through Satan's multiplying glass of desperation, when I shall think them greater than his mercy, upon my death-bed? *Is that he said all, he left out nothing*[4], is the apostle's argument: and, he is not almighty, if he cannot; his mercy endures not for ever, if he do not forgive all.

*Sin*, and *all sin*, even *blasphemy:* now blasphemy is not restrained to God alone; other persons besides God, other things, besides persons, may be blasphemed. The word of God, the doctrine, religion may be blasphemed[5]. Magistracy and dignities may be blasphemed[6]. Nay, *Omnia quæ ignorant*, says that apostle, *They blaspheme all things which they know not.* And for persons, the apostle takes it to his own person, *Being blasphemed, yet we intreat*[7]; and he communicates it to all men, *Neminem blasphemate, Blaspheme no man*[8]. Blasphemy, as it is a contumelious speech, derogating from any man, that good that is in him, or attributing to any man, that ill that is not in him, may be fastened upon any man. For the most part it is understood a

[3] Matt. ix. 2. [4] Heb. ii. 8. [5] 1 Tim. vi. 1.
[6] Jude 8, 10. [7] 1 Cor. iv. 13. [8] Tit. iii. 2.

sin against God, and that directly; and here, by the manner of Christ expressing himself, it is made the greatest sin; *all sin*, even *blasphemy*. And yet, a drunkard that cannot name God, will spew out a blasphemy against God: a child that cannot spell God, will stammer out a blasphemy against God: if we smart, we blaspheme God, and we blaspheme him if we be tickled; if I lose at play, I blaspheme, and if my fellow lose, he blasphemes, so that God is always sure to be a loser. An usurer can show me his bags, and an extortioner his houses, the fruits, the revenues of his sin; but where will the blasphemer show me his blasphemy, or what he hath got by it? The licentious man hath had his love in his arms, and the envious man hath had his enemy in the dust, but wherein hath the blasphemer hurt God?

In the school[9] we put it for the consummation of the torment of the damned, that at the resurrection, they shall have bodies, and so be able, even verbally, to blaspheme God; herein we exceed the devil already, that we can speak blasphemously. There is a rebellious part of the body, that Adam covered with fig-leaves, that hath damned many a wretched soul; but yet, I think, not more than the tongue; and therefore the whole torment that Dives suffered in hell, is expressed in that part, *Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue*[10]. The Jews that crucified God, will not sound the name of God, and we for whom he was crucified, belch him out in our surfeits, and foam him out in our fury: an impertinent sin, without occasion before, and an unprofitable sin, without recompense after, and an incorrigible sin too; for, almost what father dares chide his son for blasphemy, that may not tell him, sir, I learnt it of you? Or what master his servant, that cannot lay the same recrimination upon him? How much then do we need this extent of God's mercy, that he will forgive *sin*, and *all sin*, and even this sin of *blasphemy*, and (which is also another addition) *blasphemy against the Son*.

This emphatical addition arises out of the connexion in the next verse, *A word*, (that is, a blasphemous word) *against the Son, shall be forgiven*. And here we carry not the word *son* so

[9] Aquin. 22 x. q. 13. ar. 4.

[10] Luke xvi. 24.

high, as that the son should be the eternal Son of God, though words spoken against the eternal Son of God by many bitter and blasphemous heretics have been forgiven: God forbid that all the Photinians who thought that Christ was not at all, till he was born of the Virgin Mary, that all the Nativitarians, that thought he was from all eternity with God, but yet was not the Son of God, that all the Arians, that thought him the Son of God, but yet not essentially, not by nature, but by grace and adoption, God forbid that all these should be damned, and because they once spoke against the Son, therefore they never repented, or were not received upon repentance. We carry not the word, son, so high, as to be the eternal Son of God, for it is in the text, *Filius hominis, The Son of man;* and, in that acceptation, we do not mean it, of all blasphemies that have been spoken of Christ, as *the Son of man*, that is, of Christ invested in the human nature; though blasphemies in that kind have been forgiven too: God forbid that all the Arians, that thought Christ so much the Son of man as that he took a human body, but not so much, as that he took a human soul, but that the Godhead itself (such a Godhead as they allowed him) was his soul; God forbid that all the Anabaptists, that confess he took a body, but not a body of the substance of the Virgin; that all the Carpocratians, that thought only his soul, and not his body ascended into heaven, God forbid all these should be damned, and never called to repentance, or not admitted upon it: there were fearful blasphemies against the Son, as the Son of God, and as the Son of man, against his Divine, and against his human nature, and those, in some of them, by God's grace forgiven too. But here we consider him only as the Son of man, merely as man; but as such a man, so good a man, as to calumniate him, to blaspheme him, was an inexcusable sin. To say of him, who had fasted forty days and forty nights, *Ecce homo vorax, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber*[11], to say of him, of whom themselves had said elsewhere, *Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man*[12], that he was *a friend of publicans, and sinners*, that this man who was *the Prince of Peace*, should *endure such contradiction*[13], this was an inexcusable sin. If any man therefore have had his good intentions mis-

[11] Matt. xi. 19. [12] Mark xii. 14. [13] Heb. xii. 3

construed, his zeal to assist God's bleeding and fainting cause, called innovation, his proceeding by ways good in themselves, to ends good in themselves, called indiscretion, let him be content to forgive them, any calumniator, against himself, who is but *a worm and no man*, since God himself forgave them against Christ, who was so *Filius hominis, the Son of man*, as that he was *the Son of God* too.

There is then forgiveness for *sin*, for *all sin*, even for *blasphemy*, for *blasphemy against the Son*, but it is *in futuro remittetur, it shall be forgiven*. It is not *remittebatur*, it was forgiven; let no man antedate his pardon, and say, His sins were forgiven in an eternal decree, and that no man that hath his name in the book of life, hath the addition, sinner; that if he were there from the beginning, from the beginning he was no sinner. It is not, in such a sense, *remittebatur*, it was forgiven; nor it is not *remittitur*, that even then, when the sin is committed, it is forgiven, whether the sinner think of it or no, that God sees not the sins of his children, that God was no more affected with David's adultery, or his murder, than an indulgent father is to see his child do some witty waggish thing, or some sportful shrewd turn. It is but *remittetur*, any sin *shall be*, that is, may be *forgiven*, if the means required by God, and ordained by him, be entertained. If I take into my contemplation, the majesty of God, and the ugliness of sin, if I divest myself of all that was sinfully got, and invest myself in the righteousness of Christ Jesus, (for else I am ill-suited, and if I clothe myself in mammon, the righteousness of Christ is no cloak for that doublet) if I come to God's church for my absolution, and the seal of that reconciliation, the blessed sacrament, *remittetur*, by those means ordained by God any sin shall be forgiven me. But if I rely upon the *remittebatur*, that I had my *quietus est* before-hand, in the eternal decree, or in the *remittuntur*, and so shut mine eyes, in an opinion that God hath shut his, and sees not the sins of his children, I change God's grammar, and I induce a dangerous solecism, for, it is not they were forgiven before they were committed, nor they are forgiven in the committing, but they shall be, by using the means ordained by God, they may be; and so, *They shall be forgiven unto men*, says the text, and that is, first, unto every man.

The kings of the earth are fair and glorious resemblances of the King of heaven; they are beams of that sun, tapers of that torch, they are like gods, they are gods: *The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*[14]: this is the Lord of heaven; the Lord's anointed, kings of the earth do so too; they have the dispensation of judgment, and of mercy, they execute, and they pardon: but yet, with this difference amongst many other, that kings of the earth (for the most part, and the best, most) bind themselves with an oath, not to pardon some offices; the King of heaven swears, and swears by himself, that there is no sinner but he can, and would pardon. At first, *Illuminat omnem hominem, He is the true light, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world*[15]; let that light (because many do interpret that place so) let that be but that natural light, which only man, and every man hath; yet that light makes him capable of the super-natural light of grace; for if he had not that reasonable soul, he could not have grace; and even by this natural light, he is able to see the invisible God, in the visible creature, and is inexcusable if he do not so. But because this light is (though not put out) brought to a dimness, by man's first fall, therefore John Baptist came to *bear witness of that light, that all men, through him, might believe*[16]: God raises up a John Baptist in every man; every man finds a testimony in himself, that he draws curtains between the light and him; that he runs into corners from that light; that he doth not make that use of those helps which God hath afforded him, as he might.

Thus God hath mercy upon all before, by way of prevention; thus he enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world: but, because for all this men do stumble, even at noon, God hath given *collyrium*, an *eye-salve*[17] to all, by which they may mend their eye-sight; he hath opened a pool of Bethesda to all, where not only he that comes at first, but he that comes even at last, he that comes washed with the water of baptism in his infancy, and he that comes washed with the tears of repentance in his age, may receive health and cleanness; for, the font at first, and the deathbed at last, are cisterns from this pool, and all men, and

[14] 1 Sam. ii. 6.
[15] John i. 9.
[16] Ver. 7.
[17] Rev. iii. 18.

at all times, may wash therein: and from this power, and this love of God, is derived both that catholic promise, *Quandocunque, At what time soever a sinner repents*, and that catholic and extensive commission, *Quorum remiseritis, Whose sins soever you remit, shall be remitted.* All men were in Adam; because the whole nature, mankind, was in him; and then, can any be without sin? All men were in Christ too, because the whole nature, mankind, was in him; and then, can any man be excluded from a possibility of mercy? There were whole sects, whole bodies of heretics, that denied the communication of God's grace to others; the Cathari denied that any man had it but themselves: the Novatians denied that any man could have it again, after he had once lost it, by any deadly sin committed after baptism, but there was never any sect that denied it to themselves, no sect of despairing men. We have some somewhere sprinkled; one in the Old Testament, Cain, and one in the New, Judas, and one in the Ecclesiastical Story, Julian; but no body, no sect of despairing men. And therefore he that abandons himself to this sin of desperation, sins with the least reason of any, for he prefers his sin above God's mercy, and he sins with the fewest examples of any, for God hath diffused this light, with an evidence to all, that all sins may be forgiven unto men, that is, unto all men; and then, herein also is God's mercy to man magnified, that it is to man, that is, only to man.

Nothing can fall into this comparison, but angels; and angels shall not be forgiven: we shall be like the angels, we shall participate of their glory which stand; but the angels shall never be like us; never return to mercy, after they are fallen. They were *primogeniti Dei*, God's first born, and yet disinherited; and disinherited without any power, at least, without purpose of revocation, without annuities, without pensions, without any present supply, without any future hope. When the angels were made, and when they fell, we dispute; but when they shall return, falls not into question. Howsoever Origen vary in himself, or howsoever he fell under that jealousy, or misinterpretation, that he thought the devil should be saved at last, I am sure his books that are extant, have pregnant and abundant testimony of their everlasting, and irreparable condemnation. To

judge by our evidence, the evidence of Scriptures, for their sin, and the evidence of our conscience, for ours, there is none of us that hath not sinned more than any of them at first; and yet Christ hath not taken the nature of angels, but of man, and redeemed us, having *reserved them in everlasting chains, under darkness*[18]: How long? *Unto the judgment of the great day*, says that apostle; and is it but till then, then to have an end? Alas no; it is not *until* that day, but *unto* that day; not that that day shall end or ease their torments which they have, but inflict accidental torments, which they have not yet; that is, an utter evacuation of that power of seducing, which, till that day come, they shall have leave to exercise upon the sons of men: to that are they reserved, and we to that glory, which they have lost, and lost for ever; and upon us, is that prayer of the apostle fallen effectually, *Mercy, and peace, and love is multiplied unto us*[19]; for, *sin*, and *all sin*, *blasphemy*, and *blasphemy against the Son*, *shall be*, that is, is not, nor was not, but may be *forgiven to men*, to all men, to none but men; and so we pass to our second part.

In this second part, which seems to present a bank even to this sea, this infinite sea of the blood of Christ Jesus; and an horizon even to this heaven of heavens, to the mercy of God, we shall proceed thus: first, we shall inquire, but modestly, what that *blasphemy*, which is commonly called *The sin against the Holy Ghost*, is: and secondly, how, and wherein it is irremissible, that it shall never be forgiven: and then thirdly, upon what places of Scripture it is grounded; amongst which, if this text do not constitute and establish that sin, *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, yet we shall find, that that sin which is directly intended in this text, is a branch of that sin, *the sin against the Holy Ghost:* and therefore we shall take just occasion from thence, to arm you with some instructions against those ways which lead into that irrecoverable destruction, into that irremissible sin: for though the sin itself be not so evident, yet the limbs of the sin, and the ways to the sin, are plain enough.

St. Augustine says, There is no question in the Scripture harder than this, what this sin is: and St. Ambrose gives some reason of the difficulty in this, *Sicut una Divinitas, una offensa:*

[18] Jude 6. [19] Ver. 2.

As there is but one Godhead, so there is no sin against God (and all sin is so) but it is against the whole Trinity: and that is true; but as there are certain attributes proper to every several person of the Trinity, so there are certain sins, more directly against the several attributes and properties of those persons, and in such a consideration, against the persons themselves. Of which there are divers sins against *power*, and they are principally against the Father; for to the Father we attribute *power;* and divers sins against *wisdom*, and *wisdom* we attribute to the Son; and divers against *goodness*, and *love*, and these we attribute to the Holy Ghost. Of those against the Holy Ghost, considered in that attribute of goodness, and of love, the place to speak, will be in our conclusion. But for this particular sin, *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, as hard as St. Augustine makes it, and justly, yet he says too, *Exercere nos voluit difficultate quæstionis, non decipere falsitate sententiæ*, God would exercise us with a hard question, but he would not deceive us with a false opinion: *Quid sit quæri, voluit, non negari;* God would have us modestly inquire what it is, not peremptorily deny that there is any such sin.

It is (for the most part) agreed, that it is a total falling away from the Gospel of Christ Jesus formerly acknowledged and professed, into a verbal calumniating, and a real persecuting of that Gospel, with a deliberate purpose to continue so to the end, and actually to do so, to persevere till then, and then to pass away in that disposition. It falls only upon the professors of the Gospel, and it is total, and it is practical, and it is deliberate, and it is final. Here we have that sin, but, by God's grace, that sinner no where.

It is therefore somewhat early, somewhat forwardly pronounced, though by a reverend man, *Certum reprobationis signum, in Spiritum blasphemia*[20], That it is an infallible assurance, that that man is a reprobate that blasphemes the Holy Ghost. For, whatsoever is an infallible sign, must be notorious to us; if we must know another thing by that, as a sign, we must know that thing which is our sign, in itself: and can we know what this blaspheming of the Holy Ghost is? Did we ever hear any man say, or see any man do anything against the Holy Ghost, of

[20] Calvin.

whom we might say upon that word, or upon that action, This man can never repent, never be received to mercy? And yet, says he, *Tenendum est, quod qui exciderint, nunquam resurgent*; We are bound to hold, that they who fall so, shall never rise again. I presume, he grounded himself in that severe judgment of his, upon such places, as that to the Romans, *When they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind*[21]: that that is the ordinary way of God's justice, to withdraw his Spirit from that man that blasphemes his Spirit; but St. Paul blasphemed, and St. Peter blasphemed, and yet were not divorced from God.

St. Augustine's rule is good; not to judge of this sin, and this sinner especially, but *a posteriori*, from his end, from his departing out of this world. Neither though I do see an ill-life, sealed with an ill-death, dare I be too forward in this judgment. He was not a Christian in profession, but worse than he are called Christians, that said, *Qui pius est, summe philosophatur*[22]; The charitable man is the great philosopher; and it is charity not to suspect the state of a dead man. Consider in how sudden a minute the Holy Ghost have sometimes wrought upon thee; and hope that he hath done so upon another. It is a moderation to be embraced, that Peter Martyr leads us to: the Primitive church had the spirit of discerning spirits; we have not; and therefore, though by way of definition, we may say, This is that sin, yet by way of demonstration, let us say of no man, This is that sinner: I may say of no man, This sin in thee is irremissible.

Now, in considering this word, irremissible, that it cannot be forgiven, we find it to be a word, rather usurped by the school, than expressed in the Scriptures: for in all those three evangelists, where this fearful denunciation is interminated, still it is in a phrase, of somewhat more mildness, than so; it is, *It shall not be forgiven*, it is not, it cannot be forgiven: it is an irremission, it is not an irremissibleness. Absolutely there is not an impossibility, and irremissibleness on God's part: but yet some kind of impossibility there is on his part, and on ours too. For, if he could forgive this sin, he would; or else, his power were above

[21] Rom. i. 28.

[22] Trismegistus.

his mercy; and his mercy is above all his works. But God can do nothing that implies contradiction; and God having declared, by what means only his mercy and forgiveness shall be conveyed to man, God should contradict himself, if he should give forgiveness to them, who will fully exclude those means of mercy. And therefore it were not boldly, nor irreverently said, that God could not give grace to a beast, nor mercy to the devil, because either they are naturally destitute, or have wilfully despoiled themselves of the capacity of grace, and mercy. When we consider, that God the Father, whom, as the root of all, we consider principally in the creation, created man in a possibility, and ability, to persist in that goodness, in which he created him, and consider that God the Son came, and wrought a reconciliation for man to God, and so brought in a treasure, in the nature thereof, a sufficient ransom for all the world, but then a man knows not this, or believes not this, otherwise than historically, morally, civilly, and so evacuates, and shakes off the God the Son, and then consider that the Holy Ghost comes, and presents means of applying all this, and making the general satisfaction of Christ reach and spread itself upon my soul, in particular, in the preaching of the word, in the seals of the sacraments, in the absolution of the church, and I preclude the ways, and shut up myself against the Holy Ghost, and so evacuate him, and shake him off, when I have resisted Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is there a fourth person in the Godhead to work upon me? If I blaspheme, that is, deliberately pronounce against the Holy Ghost, my sin is irremissible therefore, because there is no body left to forgive it, nor way left, wherein forgiveness should work upon me; so far it is irremissible on God's part, and on mine too.

And then, take it there, in that state of irremissibleness, and consider seriously the fearfulness of it. I have been *angry;* and then, (as Christ tells me[28]) I have been *in danger of a judgment;* but in judgment, I may have counsel, I may be heard; I have said *Raca*, expressed my anger and so been *in danger of a council;* but a council does but consult, what punishment is fit to be inflicted; and so long there is hope of mitigation, and commutation of penance; but I have said *fatue*, I have called

[28] Matt. v. 22.

my brother *fool*, and so am *in danger of hell fire*. In the first, there is *ira*[24], an inward commotion, an irregular distemper; in the second, there is *ira et vox*; in the first it is but *ira carnis, non anima*, it is but my passion, it is not I that am angry, but in the second I have suffered my passion to vent and utter itself; but in the third, there is *ira, vox et vituperatio*, a distemper within, a declaration to evil example without, and an injury and defamation to a third person, and this exalts the offence to the height: but when this third person comes to be the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, in all the other cases, there is danger, danger of judgment, danger of a council, danger of hell, but here is irremissibleness, hell itself, and no avoiding of hell, no cooling in hell, no deliverance from hell; irremissible; those hands that reached to the ends of the world, in creating it, and span the world in preserving it, and stretched over all in redeeming it, those hands have I manacled, that they cannot open unto me: that tenderness that is affected to all, have I damped, retarded that proneness, stupified that alacrity, confounded that voice, diverted those eyes, that are naturally disposed to all: and all this, irremissibly, for ever; not, though he would, but because he will not show mercy; not, though I would, but because I cannot ask mercy; and therefore beware all approaches towards that sin, from which there is no returning, no redemption.

We are come now, in our order, to our third and last branch of this last part, that this doctrine of a *sin against the Holy Ghost*, is not a dream of the schoolmen, though they have spoken many things frivolously of it, but grounded in evident places of Scriptures: amongst which, we look especially, how far this text conduces to that doctrine. There are two places ordinarily cited, which seem directly to concern this sin; and two others, which to me seem not to do so. Those of the first kind, are both in the Epistle to the Hebrews: there the apostle says, *For those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away, it is impossible to renew them by repentance*[25]. Now, if final impenitence had been added, there could have been no question, but

[24] Augustine, Chrysostom. [25] Heb. vi. 4.

that this must be the sin against the Holy Ghost; and because the apostle speaks of such a total falling away, as precludes all way of repentance, it includes final impenitence, and so makes up that sin. The other place from which it rises most pregnantly, is, *Of how sore a punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace*[26]? As he had said before, *If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation*[27]. But yet, though from these places, there arises evidence, that such a sin there is, as naturally shuts out repentance, and so is thereby irremissible, yet there arise no marks, by which I can say, this man is such a sinner; not though he himself would swear to me, that he were so now, and that he would continue so, till death.

The other places that do not so directly concern this sin, and yet are sometimes used in this affair, are, one in St. John, and this text another. That in St. John is, *There is a sin unto death, I do not say, that he shall pray for it*[28]. It is true, that the master of the sentences, and from him, many of the school, and many of our later interpreters too, do understand this, of the sin against the Holy Ghost, because we are (almost) forbidden to pray for it; but yet we are not absolutely forbidden, in that we are not bidden. And if we were forbidden, when God says to Jeremy, *Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry, nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee*[29], and again, *Pray not for them, for I will not hear them*[30], not them, though they should come to pray for themselves, God forbid that we should therefore say, that all that people had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. And for this particular place of St. John, that answer may suffice, which very good divines have given, pray not for them, is indeed pray not with them, admit them to no part in the public prayers for the congregation, but if they sin a sin unto death, a notorious, an inexcusable sin, let them be persons excommunicated to thee.

For the words in this text, which seem to many appliable to

[26] Heb. x. 29. [27] Ver. 26. [28] 1 John v. 16.
[29] Jer. vii. 16. [30] Jer. xi. 14.

that great sin, it is not clear, it is not much probable, that they can be so applied. Take the words invested in their circumstance, in the context and coherence, and it will appear evident. Christ speaks this to the Pharisees, upon occasion of that which they had said to him, and of him before, and he carries it, intends it no farther. That appears by the first word of our text, *Propterea, Therefore I say unto you;* Therefore, that is, because you have used such words unto me. And St. Mark makes it more clear[31], *He said this to them, because they said, he had an unclean spirit;* because they said he did his miracles by the power of the devil. Now, this was certainly a sin against the Holy Ghost, so far, as that it was distinguished from the sins against the Son of man; but it was not the sin against the Holy Ghost: for, Christ being a mixed person, God and man, did some things, in which his divinity had nothing to do, but were only actions of a mere natural man, and when they slandered him in these, they blasphemed the Son of man. Some things he did in the power of his Godhead, in which his humanity contributed nothing; as all his miracles; and when they attributed these works to the devil, they blasphemed the Holy Ghost. And therefore St. Augustine says, that Christ in this place, did not so much accuse the Pharisees, that they had already incurred the sin of the Holy Ghost, as admonish them, that by adventuring upon such sins as were sins against the Holy Ghost, they might at last fall into the sin, that impenitible, and therefore irremissible sin. But that sin, this could not be, because the Pharisees had not embraced the Gospel before, and so this could not be a falling from the Gospel, in them: neither does it appear to have continued to a final impenitence; so far from it, as that St. Chrysostom makes no doubt, but that some of these Pharisees did repent upon Christ's admonition.

Now, beloved, since we see by this collation of places, that it is not safe to say of any man, he is this sinner, nor very constantly agreed upon, what is this sin, but yet we are sure, that such a sin there is, that captivates even God himself, and takes from him the exercise of his mercy, and casts a dumbness, a speechlessness upon the church itself, that she may not pray for

[31] Mark iii. 30.

such a sinner; and since we see, that Christ, with so much earnestness, rebukes the Pharisees for this sin in the text, because it was a limb of that sin, and conduced to it, let us use all religious diligence, to keep ourselves in a safe distance from it. To which purpose, be pleased to cast a particular, but short and transitory glance, upon some such sins, as therefore, because they conduce to that, are sometimes called sins against the Holy Ghost. Sins against *power*, (that is the *Father's* attribute) sins of infirmity are easily forgiven; sins against *wisdom*, (that is the *Son's* attribute) sins of ignorance are easily forgiven; but sins against *goodness*, (that is the *Holy Ghost's* attribute,) sins of an hard and ill nature are hardly forgiven: not at all, when it comes to be The sin; not easily, when they are Those sins, those that conduce to it, and are branches of it.

For branches, the schoolmen have named three couples, which they have called *sins against the Holy Ghost*, because naturally they shut out those means by which the Holy Ghost might work upon us. The first couple is, *presumption* and *desperation;* for presumption takes away the fear of God, and desperation the love of God. And then, they name *impenitence*, and *hardness of heart;* for impenitence removes all sorrow for sins past, and hardness of heart all tenderness towards future tentations. And lastly, they name *The resisting of a truth acknowledged before*, and *the envying of other men, who have made better use of God's grace than we have done;* for this resisting of a truth, is a shutting up of ourselves against it, and this envying of others, is a sorrow, that that truth should prevail upon them. And truly (to reflect a very little upon these three couples again) to presume upon God, that God cannot damn me eternally in the next world, for a few half hours in this; what is a fornication, or what is an idolatry to God? what is a jest, or a ballad, or a libel to a king? Or to despair, that God will not save me, how well soever I live, after a sin? What is a tear, what is a sigh, what is a prayer to God? what is a petition to a king? To be impenitent, senseless of sins past; I passed yesterday in riot, and yesternight in wantonness, and yet I hear of some place, some office, some good fortune fallen to me to-day; to be hardened against future sins; shall I forbear some company, because that company leads me

into tentation? Why, that very tentation will lead me to preferment; to forsake the truth formerly professed, because the times are changed, and wiser men than I change with them; to envy and hate another, another state, another church, another man, because they stand out in defence of the truth, (for, if they would change, I might have the better colour, the better excuse of changing too) all these are shrewd and slippery approaches towards the sin against the Holy Ghost, and therefore the schoolmen have called all these six, (not without just reason, and good use) by that heavy name.

And some of the fathers have extended it farther, than to these six. St. Bernard, in particular, says, *Nolle obedire*, To resist lawful authority; and another, *Simulata pœnitentia*, To delude God with relapses, and counterfeit repentances; and another also, *Omne schisma*, All schismatical renting of the peace of the church, all these they call in that sense, *sins against the Holy Ghost*. Now, all sins against the Holy Ghost, are not irremissible. Stephen told his persecutors, *They resisted the Holy Ghost*[38], and yet he prayed for them. But because these sins may, and ordinarily do come to that sin, stop betimes. David was far from the murder of Uriah, when he did but look upon his wife, as she was bathing. A man is far from defying the Holy Ghost, when he does but neglect him; and yet David did come, and he will come to the bottom quickly. It may make some impression in you, to tell, and to apply a short story. In a great schism at Rome, Ladislaus took that occasion to debauch and corrupt some of the nobility; it was discerned; and then, to those seven governors, whom they had before, whom they called *sapientes*, wise men, they added seven more, and called them *bonos*, good men, honest men, and relied, and confided in them. Goodness is the attribute of the Holy Ghost; if you have greatness, you may seem to have some of the Father, for power is his; if you have wisdom, you may seem to have some of the Son, for that is his: if you have goodness, you have the Holy Ghost, who shall lead you into all truth. And goodness is, to be good and easy in receiving his impressions, and good and constant in retaining them, and good and diffusive in deriving them upon others: to embrace

[38] Acts vii. 51, 60.

the Gospel, to hold fast the Gospel, to propagate the Gospel, this is the goodness of the Holy Ghost. And to resist the entrance of the Gospel, to abandon it after we have professed it, to forsake them, whom we should assist and succour in the maintenance of it, this is to depart from the goodness of the Holy Ghost: and by these sins against him, to come too near the sin, the irremissible sin, in which the calamities of this world shall enwrap us, and deliver us over to the everlasting condemnation of the next. This is as much as these words do justly occasion us to say of that sin; and into a more curious search thereof, it is not holy sobriety to pierce.

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## SERMON XXXIV.

### *PREACHED UPON WHITSUNDAY.*

JOHN xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.
Of sin, because ye believe not on me.
Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.
Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged.

OUR *panis quotidianus*, Our daily bread, is that *juge sacrificium*, that daily sacrifice of meditating upon God; our *panis hodiernus*, this day's bread, is to meditate upon the Holy Ghost. To-day if ye will hear his voice, to-day ye are with him in paradise: for, wheresoever the Holy Ghost is, he creates a paradise. The day is not past yet; as our Saviour said to Peter[1], *Hodie, in nocte hac*, This day, even in this night thou shalt deny me, so, *Hodie in nocte hac*, Even now, though evening, the day-spring from on high visits you, God carries back the shadow of your sun-dial, as to Hezekiah[2]; and now God brings you to the beginning of this day, if now you take knowledge, that he is come, who, when he comes, *Reproves the world of sin, &c.*

[1] Luke xxiii. 43; Mark xiv. 10. [2] Isaiah xxxviii. 8.

The solemnity of the day requires, and the method of the words offers for our first consideration, the person; who is not named in our text, but designed by a most emphatical denotation, *ille*, *he*, he who is all, and doth all. But the word hath relation to a name, proper to the Holy Ghost: for, in the verse immediately preceding, our Saviour tells his disciples, *That he will send them the Comforter*. So, forbearing all other mysterious considerations of the Holy Ghost, we receive him in that notion, and function in which Christ sends him, *The Comforter*. And therefore, in this capacity, as *the Comforter*, we must consider his action, *Arguet, He shall reprove;* reprove, and yet comfort; nay, therefore comfort, because reprove: and then the subject of his action, *Mundum, The world*, the whole world; no part left unreproved, yet no part left without comfort: and after that, what he reproves the world of; that multiplies; *of sin, of righteousness, of judgment*. Can there be comfort in reproof for sin? or can there lie a reproof upon righteousness, or upon judgment? Very justly; though the evidence seem at first, as strange as the crime: for, though that be good evidence against the sin of the world, that they believe not in Christ, (*Of sin, because they believe not on me*) yet to be *Reproved of righteousness, because Christ goes to his Father, and they see him no more*, and to be *Reproved of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged*, this seems strange, and yet this must be done, and done to our comfort; for, this must be done, *Cum venerit*, then when the Holy Ghost, and he in that function, as the comforter, *is come*, is present, is working.

Beloved, reproofs upon others without charity, rather to defame them, than amend them; reproofs upon thyself, without showing mercy to thine own soul, diffidences, and jealousies, and suspicions of God, either that he hated thee before thy sin, or hates thee irremediably, irreconcileably, irrecoverably, irreparably for thy sin, these are reproofs, but they are *Absente Spiritu*, In the absence of the Holy Ghost, before he comes, or when he is gone; *When he comes*, and stays, *he shall reprove*, and *reprove all the world*, and all the world of those errors, *sin, and righteousness, and judgment*, and those errors upon those evidences, *Of sin, because ye believe not on me, &c.* But, in all this proceeding he shall never divest the nature of a comforter; in that capacity he

is sent, in that he comes, and works. I doubt I shall see an end of my hour, and your patience, before I shall have passed those branches, which appertain most properly to the celebration of this day, the person, the comforter, his action, reproof, the subject thereof, the world, and the time, *Cum venerit*, When he comes. The indictment, of what the accusation is, and the evidence, how it is proved, may exercise your devotion at other times. This day, the Holy Ghost is said to have come suddenly[3], and therefore in that pace we proceed, and make haste to the consideration of the person, *Ille*, *When he*, he the Holy Ghost, the comforter, *is come*.

*Ille*, *ille* alone, *he*, is an emphatical denotation; for to this purpose *ille* and *ipse* is all one; and then, you know the emphasis of that *ipse*; *Ipse conteret*, *He* or *It shall bruise the serpent's head*[4], denotes the Messiah, though there be no Messiah named: this *ipse* is so emphatical a denotation, as that the church of Rome, and the church of God strives for it; for they will needs read it *ipsa*, and so refer our salvation, in the bruising of the serpent's head, to the Virgin Mary: we refer it according to the truth of the doctrine, and of the letter, to Christ himself, and therefore read it *ipse*, *he*. If there were no more but that in David, *It is he that hath made us*[5], every man would conclude, that that he is God. And if St. Paul had said *ipse* alone, and not *ipse Spiritus*, that *he*, and not *he the Spirit bears witness with our spirit*[6], every spirit would have understood this to be the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost. If in our text there had been no more, but such a denotation of a person that should speak to the hearts of all the world, that that *ille*, that *he* would proceed thus, we must necessarily have seen an Almighty power in that denotation; but because that denotation might have carried terror in it, being taken alone, therefore we are not left to that, but have a relation to a former name, and specification of the Holy Ghost, *the Comforter*.

For the establishment of Christ's divinity, Christ is called *The mighty God*[7]; for his relation to us, he hath divers names. As we were all *In massa damnata*, forfeited, lost, he is *Redemptor*, a

[3] Acts ii. 2. [4] Gen. iii. 15. [5] Psal. c. 3.
[6] Rom. viii. 16. [7] Isaiah ix. 6.

Redeemer, for that that is past, *The Redeemer shall come to Sion*, says the prophet[8], and so Job saw *his Redeemer*[9], one that should redeem him from those miseries that oppressed him. As Christ was pleased to provide for the future, so he is, *Salvator*, a Saviour, therefore the angel gave him that name Jesus, *For he shall save his people from their sins*[10]. So, because to this purpose Christ consists of two natures, God and man, he is called our Mediator[11]. *There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* Because he presents those merits which are his, as ours, and in our behalf, he is called an advocate, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*[12]. And because every man is to expect according to his actions, he is called the Judge[13], *We testify that it is he, that is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.* Now, for Christ's first name, which is the root of all, which is, *The mighty God, no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*[14]; and there is our first comfort, in knowing that Christ is God; for, he were an intruder for that which is past, no Redeemer, he were a weak Saviour for the future, an insufficient Mediator, a silenced Advocate, and a Judge that might be misinformed, if he were not God. And though he were God, he might be all these to my discomfort, if there were not a Holy Ghost to make all these offices comfortable unto me. To be a Redeemer and not a Saviour, is but to pay my debts, and leave me nothing to live on. To be a mediator, a person capable by his composition of two natures, to intercede between God and man, and not to be my advocate, is but to be a good counsellor, but not of counsel with me; to be a judge of quick and dead, and to proceed out of outward evidence, and not out of his bosom mercy, is but an acceleration of my conviction; I were better lie in prison still, than appear at that assize; better lie in the dust of the grave for ever, than come to that judgment. But, as there is *Mens in anima*, There is a mind in the soul, and every man hath a soul, but every man hath not a mind, that is, a consideration, an actuation, an application of the faculties of the soul to particulars; so there is

[8] Isaiah lix. 20. [9] Job xix. 2. [10] Matt. i. 21.
[11] 1 Tim. ii. 5. [12] 1 John ii. 1.
[13] Rom. ii. 6; Acts x. 42. [14] 1 Cor. xii, 3.

*Spiritus in Spiritu*, a Holy Ghost in all the holy offices of Christ, which offices, being, in a great part, directed upon the whole world, are made comfortable to me, by being, by this holy Spirit, turned upon me, and appropriated to me; for so, even that name of Christ, which might most make me afraid, the name of judge, becomes a comfort to me. To this purpose does St. Basil call the Holy Ghost, *Verbum Dei, quia interpres filii:* The Son of God is the word of God, because he manifests the Father, and the Holy Ghost is the word of God, because he applies the Son. Christ comes with that loud proclamation, *Ecce auditum fecit*[15], Behold the Lord hath proclaimed it, to the end of the world, *Ecce salvator*, and *Ecce merces*, Behold his salvation, Behold thy reward, (this is his publication in the manifest ordinances of the church) and then the Holy Ghost whispers to thy soul, as thou standest in the congregation, in that voice that he promises, *Sibilabo populum meum*[16], I will hiss, I will whisper to my people by soft and inward inspirations. Christ came to tell us all, *That to as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God*[17], the Holy Ghost comes to tell thee, that thou art one of them. The Holy Ghost is therefore *Legatus*, and *Legatum Christi*, he is Christ's ambassador sent unto us, and he is his legacy bequeathed unto us by his will; his will made of force by his death, and proved by his ascension.

Now, when those days were come, that the *Bridegroom was to be taken from them*, Christ Jesus to be removed from their personal sight, and conversation, and therefore even the *children of the marriage chamber were to mourn, and fast*[18]; when that church that mourned, and lamented his absence, when she was but his *spouse*[19], must necessarily mourn now in a more vehement manner, when she was to be, (in some sense) his *widow;* when that *shepherd* was not only to be *smitten*, and so *the flock dispersed*[20], (this was done in his passion) but he was to be taken away, in his ascension; what a powerful comforter had that need to be, that should be able to recompense the absence of Christ Jesus himself, and to infuse comfort into his orphans, the children of his marriage chamber, into his widow, the desolate, and

[15] Isaiah lxii. 11. [16] Zach. x. 8. [17] John i. 12.
[18] Matt. ix. 15. [19] Cant. [20] Matt. xxvi. 21.

disconsolate church, into his flock, his amazed, his distressed, and, (as we may, properly enough, say in this case) his beheaded apostles and disciples? *Quantus ergo Deus, qui dat Deum*[21]? Less than God could not minister this comfort; how great a God is he, that sends a God to comfort us? And how powerful a comforter he, who is not only sent by God, but is God? Therefore does the apostle enlarge, and dilate, and delight his soul upon this comfort, *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any affliction, by that comfort, wherewith ourselves are comforted of God*[22]. The apostle was loath to depart from the word, *comfort;* and therefore, as *God, because he could swear by no greater, sware by himself*[23], so, because there is no stronger adjuration, than the comfort itself, to move you to accept this comfort, as the apostle did, so we intreat you by that, *If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels, and mercy*[24], Lay hold upon this true comfort, the coming of the Holy Ghost, and say to all the deceitful comforts of this world, not only *Vane consolati estis*[25], Your comforts are frivolous, but *Onerosi consolatores*, Your comforts are burdensome[26]; there is not only a disappointing of hopes, but an aggravating of sin, in entertaining the comforts of this world. As Barnabas, that is, *Filius consolationis, The Son of consolation*[27], that he might be capable of this comfort, divested himself of all worldly possessions, so, as such sons, *Suck and be satisfied, at the breasts of this consolation, that you may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of his glory*[28]; *and as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem*[29]. Heaven is glory, and heaven is joy; we cannot tell which most; we cannot separate them; and this comfort is joy in the Holy Ghost. This makes all Job's states alike; as rich in the first chapter of his book, where all is suddenly lost, as in the last, where all is abundantly restored. This consolation from the Holy Ghost makes my midnight noon, mine

[21] Augustine. [22] 2 Cor. i. 31. [23] Heb. vi. 13.
[24] Phil. ii. 1. [25] Zach. x. ii. [26] Job xvi. ii.
[27] Acts iv. 36. [28] Isaiah LXVI. 11. [29] Ver. 13.

executioner a physician, a stake and pile of fagots, a bonfire of triumph; this consolation makes a satire, and slander, and libel against me, a panegyric, and an elogy in my praise; it makes a *tolle* an *ave*, a *væ* an *euge*, a *crucifige* an *Hosanna;* it makes my death-bed, a marriage-bed, and my passing-bell, an epithalamium. In this notion therefore we receive this person, and in this notion we consider his proceeding, *Ille*, *He*, he the Comforter, *shall reprove.*

This word, that is here translated *To reprove*, *Arguere*, hath a double use and signification in the Scriptures. First to reprehend, to rebuke, to correct, with authority, with severity; so David, *Ne in furore arguas me, O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger*[30]*:* and secondly, to convince, to prove, to make a thing evident, by undeniable inferences, and necessary consequences; so, in the instructions of God's ministers, the first is *to reprove*, and then *to rebuke*[31]*;* so that reproving is an act of a milder sense, than rebuking is. St. Augustine interprets these words twice in his works; and in the first place he follows the first signification of the word, that the Holy Ghost should proceed, when he came, by power, by severity against the world. But though that sense will stand well with the first act of this reproof, (that he shall *reprove*, that is, reprehend *the world of sin*) yet it will not seem so properly said, to reprehend the world of righteousness, or of judgment; for how is righteousness, and judgment the subject of reprehension? Therefore St. Augustine himself in the other place, where he handles these words, embraces the second sense, *Hoc est arguere mundum, ostendere vera esse, quæ non credidit;* This is to reprove the world, to convince the world of her errors, and mistakings; and so (scarce any excepted) do all the ancient expositors take it, according to that, *All things are reproved of the light, and so made manifest*[32]*;* the light does not reprehend them, not rebuke them, not chide, not upbraid them; but to declare them, to manifest them, to make the world see clearly what they are, this is to reprove.

That reproving then, which is warrantable by the Holy Ghost, is not a sharp increpation, a bitter proceeding, proceeding only out of power, and authority, but by enlightening, and informing,

[30] Psal. vi. 1. [31] 2 Tim. iv. 2. [32] Ephes. v. 13.

and convincing the understanding. The signification of this word, which the Holy Ghost uses here for reproof, *Elenchos*, is best deduced, and manifested to us, by the philosopher who had so much use of the word, who expresses it thus, *Elenchus est syllogismus contra contraria opinantem;* A reproof, is a proof, a proof by way of argument, against another man, who holds a contrary opinion. All the pieces must be laid together: for, first it must be against an opinion, and then an opinion contrary to truth, and then such an opinion held, insisted upon, maintained, and after all this, the reproof must lie in argument, not in force, not in violence.

First it must come so far, as to be an opinion; which is a middle station, between ignorance, and knowledge; for knowledge excludes all doubting, all hesitation; opinion does not so; but opinion excludes indifferency, and equanimity; I am rather inclined to one side than another, when I am of either opinion. *Id opinatur quisque quod nescit*[33]: A man may have an opinion that a thing is so, and yet not know it. St. Bernard proposes three ways for our apprehending divine things; first, understanding, which relies upon reason; faith, which relies upon supreme authority; and opinion, which relies upon probability, and verisimilitude. Now there may arise in some man, some mistakings, some misapprehensions of the sense of a place of Scripture, there may arise some scruple in a case of conscience, there may arise some inclinations to some person, of whose integrity and ability I have otherwise had experience, there may arise some paradoxical imaginations in myself, and yet these never attain to the settledness of an opinion, but they float in the fancy, and are but waking dreams; and such imaginations, and fancies, and dreams, receive too much honour in the things, and too much favour in the persons, if they be reproved, or questioned, or condemned, or disputed against. For, oftentimes, even a condemnation nourishes the pride of the author of an opinion; and besides, begets a dangerous compassion, in spectators and hearers; and then, from pitying his pressures and sufferings, who is condemned, men come out of that pity, to excuse his opinions; and from excusing them, to incline towards them; and so that which was but straw at

[33] Lactantius.

first, by being thus blown by vehement disputation, sets fire upon timber, and draws men of more learning and authority to side, and mingle themselves in these impertinencies. Every fancy should not be so much as reproved, disputed against, or called in question.

As it must not be only a fancy, an imagination, but an opinion, (in which, though there be not a *certo*, yet there is a *potius*, though I be not sure, yet I do rather think it) so we consider *contraria opinantem*, that it must be an opinion contrary to something that we are sure of; that is, to some received article, or to some evident religious duty; contrary to religion, as religion is matter of faith, or as religion is matter of obedience, to lawful authority. Though fancies grow to be opinions, that men come to think they have reasons for their opinions, and to know they have other men on their side, in those opinions; yet, as long as these are but opinions of a little too much, or a little too little, in matter of ceremony and circumstance, as long as they are but deflectings, and deviations upon collateral matters, no foundation shaked, no corner-stone displaced, as long as they are but preteritions, not contradictions, but omissions, not usurpations, they are not worthy of a reproof, of a conviction, and there may be more danger than profit in bringing them into an over-vehement agitation. Those men whose end is schism, and sedition, and distraction, are brought so near their own ends, and the accomplishment of their own desires, if they can draw other men together by the ears: as some have all they desire, if they can make other men drunk, so have these if they can make sober men wrangle.

They must be opinions, not fancies, and they must have a contrariety, an opposition to certain truths, and then they must be held, persisted in, before it be fit to give a reproof, either by calling in question, or by confutation. As some men are said to have told a lie so often, as that at last, they believe it themselves, so a man admits sometimes an opinion to lodge so long, as that *transit in intellectum*[34], It fastens upon his understanding, and that that he did but think before, now he seems to himself to know it, and he believes it. And then, *Fides si habet hæsitationem, in-*

[34] Bernard.

*firma est*, As that faith that admits a scruple is weak, and so, without scruple he comes peremptorily to believe it. But so, *Opinio si habet assertionem, temeraria est*, When that which is but an opinion comes to be published and avowed for a certain, and a necessary truth, then it becomes dangerous; and that grows apace; for scarcely does any man believe an opinion to be true, but he hath a certain appetite and itch to infuse it into others too.

Now when these pieces meet, when these atoms make up a body, a body of error, that it come to an opinion, a half-assurance, and that in something contrary to foundations, and that it be held stiffly, publicly persisted in, then enters this reproof; but yet even then reproof is but *syllogismus*, it is but an argument, it is but convincing, it is not destroying; it is not an inquisition, a prison, a sword, an axe, a halter, a fire; it is a syllogism; not a syllogism, whose *major* is this, others, your ancestors believed it, and the *minor* this, we that are your superiors believe it, *ergo* you must, or else be banished or burnt. With such syllogisms the Arians abounded, where they prevailed in the primitive church, and this is the logic of the inquisition of Rome. But our syllogism must be a syllogism within our author's definition, when out of some things which are agreed on all sides, other things that are controverted, are made evident and manifest. Hell is presented to us by fire, but fire without light: heaven by light, and light without any ill effect of fire in it. Where there is nothing but an accuser, (perchance not that) and fire, citation and excommunication, here is Satan, (who is an accuser, but an invisible one) and here is hell itself, a devilish and a dark proceeding. But when they, to whom this reproof belongs, take Christ's way, not to *tread out smoking flax*, that a poor soul, misled by ignorant zeal, and so easily combustible and apt to take fire, be not trodden down with too much power, and passion, when they do not *break a bruised reed*, that is, not terrify a distracted conscience, which perchance a long ill conversation with schismatical company, and a spiritual melancholy, and over-tender sense of sin hath cast too low before, then does this reproof work aright, when it is brought in with light before fire, with convenient instruction, and not hasty condemnation.

We may well call this *Viam Christi*, and *Viam Spiritus Sancti*,

Christ's way, and the Holy Ghost's way, for he had need be a very good Christian, and a very sanctified man, that can walk in that way; *Perfectorum est, nihil in peccatore odisse præter peccata*[35]: He that hates nothing in a heretic, or in a schismatic, but the schism, or the heresy, he that sets bounds to that sea, and hath said to his affections, and human passions, stay there, go no farther, hath got far in the steps of Christian perfection. The slipperiness, the precipitation is so great on the other side, that commonly we begin to hate the person first, and then grow glad, when he grows guilty of anything worthy our hate; and we make God himself the devil's instrument, when we pretend zeal to his service, in these reproofs and corrections, and serve only our own impotent passion, and inordinate ambition. For therein *Plerumque cum tibi videris odisse inimicum, fratrem odisti, et nescis*[36]; Thou thinkest or pretendest to hate an enemy, and hatest thine own brother, and knowest it not; thou knowest not, considerest not, that he, by good usage and instruction, might have been made thy brother, a fellow-member in the visible church, by outward conformity, and in the invisible too, by inward. *Etiam fictilia vasa confringere, domino soli concessum*[37], If thou be a vessel of gold or silver, and that other of clay, thou of a clear, and rectified, he of a dark and perverted understanding, yet even vessels of clay are only in the power of that potter's hand that made them, or bought them, to break, and no bodies else: still, as long as it is possible, proceed we with the moderation of that blessed Father[38], *Sic peccata hæreticorum compesce, ut sint quos pœniteat peccasse*, Take not away the subject of the error, (the perverseness of the man) so, as that thou take away the subject of repentance, the man himself; if thou require fruit, leave a tree; if thou wouldst have him repent, take not away his life, says he. We see the leisurely pace that God's justice walks in: when Daniel had told Nebuchadnezzar his danger[39], yea *the decree of God upon him*, (as he calls it) yet he told him a way how to revoke it; *by works of mercy to the poor, and breaking off his sins;* and after all this, he had a year's space to consider himself, before the judgment was executed upon him.

[35] Augustine. [36] Augustine. [37] Cyprian.
[38] Augustine. [39] Dan. iv. 24.

But now beloved, all that we have said, or can be said to this purpose, conduces but to this, that though this reproof, which the Holy Ghost leads us to, be rather in convincing the understanding by argument, and other persuasions, than by extending our power to the destruction of the person, yet this hath a modification, how it must be, and a determination where it must end, for there are cases in which we may, we must go farther. For, for the understanding, we know how to work upon that; we know what arguments have prevailed upon us, with what arguments we have prevailed upon others, and those we can use: so far, *Ut nihil habeant contra, etsi non assentiantur*, That though they will not be of our mind, yet they shall have nothing to say against it. So far we can go upon that faculty, the understanding. But the will of man is so irregular, so unlimited a thing, as that no man hath a bridle upon another's will, no man can undertake nor promise for that; no creature hath that faculty but man, yet no man understands that faculty. It hath been the exercise of a thousand wits, it hath been the subject, yea the knot and perplexity of a thousand disputations, to find out, what it is that determines, that concludes the will of man so, as that it assents thereunto. For, if that were absolutely true which some have said, (and yet perchance that is as far as any have gone) that *Ultimus actus intellectus est voluntas*, That the last act of the understanding is the will, then all our labour were still to work upon the understanding, and when that were rectified, the will must follow. But it is not so; as we feel in ourselves that we do many sins, which our understanding, and the soul of our understanding, our conscience, tells us we should not do, so we see many others persist in errors, after manifest convincing, after all reproof which can be directed upon the understanding.

When therefore those errors which are to be reproved, are in that faculty, which is not subject to this reproof by argument, in a perverted will, because this wilful stubbornness is always accompanied with pride, with singularity, with faction, with schism, with sedition, we must remember the way which the Holy Ghost hath directed us in, *If the iron be blunt, we must either put to more strength, or whet the edge*[40]. Now, when the

[40] Eccles. x. 10.

fault is in the perverseness of the will, we can put to no more strength, no argument serves to overcome that; and therefore the Holy Ghost hath admitted another way, *To whet the iron*; and in that way does the apostle say, *Utinam abscindantur*, *I would they were even cut off which trouble you*[41]. There is an incorrigibility, in which, when the reproof cannot lead the will, it must draw blood; which is, where pretences of religion are made, and treasons, and rebellions, and invasions, and massacres of people, and assassinates of princes practised. And this is a reproof (which, as we shall see of the rest, in the following branches is) from the Holy Ghost, in his function in this text, as he is a comforter; this therefore is our comfort, that our church was never negligent in reproving the adversary, but hath from time to time strenuously and confidently maintained her truths against all oppositions, to the satisfying of any understanding, though not to the reducing of some perverse wills. So Gregory de Valentia professes of our arguments, I confess these reasons would conclude my understanding, *Nisi didicissem captivare intellectum meum ad intellectum ecclesiæ*, But that I have learned to captivate my understanding to the understanding of the church, and, say what they will, to believe as the church of Rome believes; which is Maldonat's profession too, upon divers of Calvin's arguments, This argument would prevail upon me, but that he was a heretic that found it. So that here is our comfort, we have gone so far in this way of reproof, *Ut nihil habeant contra*, *etsi nobiscum non sentiant*. This is our comfort, that as some of the greatest divines in foreign parts, so also, in our church at home, some of the greatest prelates, who have been traduced to favour Rome, have written the most solidly and effectually against the heresies of Rome of any other. But it must be a comfort upon them that are reproved. And this is their comfort, that the state never drew drop of blood for religion; but then, this is our comfort still, that where their perverseness shall endanger either church or state, both the state and church may, by the Holy Ghost's direction, and will return to those means which God allows them for their preservation, that is, *To whet the edge of the iron*, in execution of the laws. And so we

[41] Gal. v. 12.

pass from our second consideration, the action, reproof, to the subject of reproof, the world, *He shall reprove the world.*

It is no wonder that this word *mundus* should have a larger signification than other words, for it contains all, embraces, comprehends all: but there is no word in Scripture, that hath not only so large, but so diverse a signification, for it signifies things contrary to one another. It signifies commonly, and primarily, the whole frame of the world; and more particularly all mankind; and oftentimes only wicked men; and sometimes only good men, as, *Dilexit mundum, God loved the world*[42], and *Hic est vere salvator mundi, This is the Christ, the Saviour of the world*[43]; and *reconciliatio mundi, The casting away of the Jews, is the reconciliation of the world*[44]: the Jews were a part of the world, but not of this world. Now in every sense, the world may well be said to be subject to the reproof of God, as reproof is a rebuke: for *he rebuked the wind, and it was quiet*[45]; and *he rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up*[46]; he rebuked the earth bitterly in that *maledicta terra*, for Adam's punishment, *Cursed be the ground for thy sake*[47]; and for the noblest part of earth, man, and the noblest part of men, kings, *He rebuked even kings for their sakes, and said, Touch not mine anointed*[48]. But this is not the rebuke of our text; for ours is a rebuke of comfort, even to them that are rebuked; whereas the angry rebuke of God carries heavy effects with it. *God shall rebuke them, and they shall fly far off*[49]; he shall chide them out of his presence, and they shall never return to it. *Increpasti superbos, et maledicti isti: Thou hast rebuked the proud*[50], and thy rebuke hath wrought upon them as a *malediction*, not physic, but poison; as it is in another Psalm, *Increpasti, et periit, Thou hast rebuked them, and they perished*[51]. In these cases, there is a working of the Holy Ghost; and that, as the Holy Ghost is a comforter; for it is a comfort to them, for whose deliverances God executes these judgments upon others, that they are executed; but we consider a rebuke, a reproof that ministers comfort even to them upon whom

[42] John iii. 16. [43] John iv. 42. [44] Rom. xi. 15. [45] Luke viii. 14.
[46] Psal. cvi. 17. [47] Gen. iii. 17. [48] Psal. cv. 14.
[49] Isaiah xvii. 13. [50] Psal. cxix. 21. [51] Psal. ix. 6.

it falls; and so in that sense, we shall see that *this Comforter reproves the world*, in all those significations of the word which we named before.

As the world is the whole frame of the world, God hath put into it a reproof, a rebuke, lest it should seem eternal, which is, a sensible decay and age in the whole frame of the world, and every piece thereof. The seasons of the year irregular and distempered; the sun fainter, and languishing; men less in stature, and shorter-lived. No addition, but only every year, new sorts, new species of worms, and flies, and sicknesses, which argue more and more putrefaction of which they are engendered. And the angels of heaven, which did so familiarly converse with men in the beginning of the world, though they may not be doubted to perform to us still their ministerial assistances, yet they seem so far to have deserted this world, as that they do not appear to us, as they did to those our fathers. St. Cyprian observed this in his time, when writing to Demetrianus, who imputed all those calamities which afflicted the world then, to the impiety of the Christians who would not join with them in the worship of their gods, Cyprian went no farther for the cause of these calamities, but *ad senescentem mundum*, to the age and impotency of the whole world; and therefore, says he, *Imputent senes Christianis, quod minus valeant in senectutem*; Old men were best accuse Christians, that they are more sickly in their age, than they were in their youth; Is the fault in our religion, or in their decay? *Canos in pueris videmus, nec ætas in senectute definit, sed incipit a senectute;* We see gray hairs in children, and we do not die old, and yet we are born old. Lest the world (as the world signifies the whole frame of the world) should glorify itself, or flatter, and abuse us with an opinion of eternity, we may admit usefully (though we do not conclude peremptorily) this observation to be true, that there is a reproof, a rebuke borne in it, a sensible decay and mortality of the whole world.

But is this a reproof agreeable to our text? a reproof that carries comfort with it? comfort to the world itself, that it is not eternal? Truly it is; as St. Paul hath most pathetically expressed it; *The creature* (that is, the world) *is in an earnest*

*expectation, the creature waiteth, the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain*[53]. Therefore the creature (that is, the world) receives a perfect comfort, in being delivered at last, and an inchoative comfort, in knowing now, that *it shall be delivered;* From what? *From subjection to vanity, from the bondage of corruption;* that whereas the world is now subject to mutability and corruption, at the resurrection it shall no longer be so, but in that measure, and in that degree which it is capable of, *it shall enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God,* that is, be as free from corruption, or change in that state, wherein it shall be glorified, as the saints shall be in the glory of their state; for, *The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold*[54]; *And there shall be new heavens, and new earth*[54]; which is a state, that this world could not attain to, if it were eternally to last, in that condition, in which it is now, a condition subject to vanity, impotency, corruption, and therefore there is a comfort in this reproof, even to this world, that it is not eternal; this world is the happier for that.

As the world, in a second sense, signifies all the men of the world, (so it is, Woe unto the world, because of offences[55]) there is a reproof born in every man; which reproof is an uncontrollable sense, and an unresistible remorse, and chiding of himself inwardly, when he is about to sin, and a horror of the majesty of God, whom, when he is alone, he is forced (and forced by himself) to fear, and to believe, though he would fain make the world believe, that he did not believe in God, but lived at peace, and subsisted of himself, without being beholden to God. For, as in nature, heavy things will ascend, and light descend rather than admit a vacuity, so in religion, the devil will get into God's room, rather than the heart of man shall be without the opinion of God; there is no Atheist; they that oppose the true, do yet worship a false god; and he that says there is no God, doth for all that, set up some god to himself. Every man hath this reproof born in him, that he doth ill, that he offends a God, that he breaks a law when he sins. And this reproof is a reproof

[53] Rom. viii. 19. [53] Isaiah xxx. 26.
[54] 2 Pet. iii. 13. [55] Matt. xviii. 7.

within our text, for it hath this comfort with it, that howsoever some men labour to overcome the natural tenderness of the conscience, and so triumph over their own ruin, and rejoice when they can sleep, and wake again without any noise in their conscience, or sense of sin, yet, in truth this candle cannot be blown out, this remorse cannot be overcome; but were it not a greater comfort to me if I could overcome it? No. For though this remorse (which is but a natural impression, and common to all men) be not grace, yet this remorse, which is the natural reproof of the soul, is that, that grace works upon. Grace doth not ordinarily work upon the stiffness of the soul, upon the silence, upon the frowardness, upon the averseness of the soul, but when the soul is suppled and mellowed, and feels this reproof, this remorse in itself, that reproof, that remorse becomes as the matter, and grace enters as the form, that becomes the body, and grace becomes the soul; and that is the comfort of this natural reproof of the world, that is, of every man: first, that it will not be quenched in itself, and then, that ordinarily it induces a nobler light then itself, which is effectual and true repentance.

As the world, in a third sense, signifies only the wicked world (so it is, *Noah in preparing an ark, condemned the world*[56]; and so, *God spared not the old world*[57]) that world, the world of the wicked suffer many reproofs, many rebukes in their hearts, which they will not discover, because they envy God that glory. We read of divers great actors in the first persecutions of the Christians, who being fearfully tormented in body and soul, at their deaths, took care only, that the Christians might not know what they suffered, lest they should receive comfort, and their glory therein. Certainly Herod would have been more affected, if he had thought that we should have known how his pride was punished with those sudden worms[58], than with the punishment itself. This is a self-reproof; even in this, though he will not suffer it to break out to the edification of others, there is some kind of chiding himself for something misdone. But is there any comfort in this reproof? Truly, beloved, I can hardly speak comfortably of such a man, after he is dead, that dies in such a disaffection, loath that God should receive glory, or his servants

[56] Heb. xi. 7. [57] 2 Pet. ii. 5. [58] Acts xii. 23.

edification by these judgments. But even with such a man, if I assisted at his deathbed, I would proceed with a hope to infuse comfort, even from that disaffection of his: as long as I saw him in any acknowledgment (though a negligent, nay though a malignant, a despiteful acknowledgment) of God, as long as I found him loath that God should receive glory, even from that loathness, from that reproof, from that acknowledgment, that there is a God to whom glory is due, I would hope to draw him to glorify that God before his last gasp; my zeal should last as long as his wife's officiousness, or his children's, or friends', or servants' obsequiousness, or the solicitude of his physicians should; as long as there were breath, they would minister some help; as long as there were any sense of God, I would hope to do some good. And so much comfort may arise even out of this reproof of the world, as the world is only the wicked world.

In the last sense, the world signifies the saints, the elect, the good men of the world, believing and persevering men. Of those Christ says, *The world shall know that I love the Father*[59]; and, *That the world may believe that thou hast sent me*[60]. And this world, that is, the godliest of this world, have many reproofs, many corrections upon them. That outwardly they are the prey of the wicked, and inwardly have that *stimulum carnis*, which is the devil's solicitor, and round about them they see nothing but profanation of his word, mis-employment of his works, his creatures, mis-constructions of his actions, his judgments, blasphemy of his name, negligence and under-valuation of his sacraments, violations of his Sabbaths, and holy convocations. O what a bitter reproof, what a manifest evidence of the infirmity, nay of the malignity of man, is this, (if it be put home, and thoroughly considered) that even the goodness of man gets to no higher a degree, but to have been the occasion of the greatest ill, the greatest cruelty that ever was done, the crucifying of the Lord of life! The better a man is, the more he concurred towards being the cause of Christ's death; which is a strange, but a true and a pious consideration. *He loved the world, and he came to save the world;* that is, most especially, and effectually, those that should believe in him, in the world, and live according to that belief, and

[59] John xiv. 31. [60] John xvii. 21.

die according to that life. If there had been no such, Christ had not died, never been crucified. So that impenitent men, misbelieving men have not put Christ to death, but it is we, we whom he loves, we that love him, that have crucified him.

In what rank then, of opposition against Christ, shall we place our sins, since even our faith and good works have been so far the cause why Christ died, that, but for the salvation of such men, believers, workers, perseverers, Christ had not died? This then is the reproof of the world, that is, of the saints of God in the world, that though *I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God*, I must *dwell in the tents of wickedness*[61], that though *my zeal consume me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words*[62], I must stay amongst them that have forgotten thy words; but this, and all other reproofs, that arise in the godly, (that we may still keep up that consideration, that he that reproves us, is *the Comforter*) have this comfort in them, that these faults that I endure in others, God hath either pardoned me, or kept from me: and that though this world be wicked, yet when I shall come to the next world, I shall find Noah, that had been drunk[63]; and Lot, that had been incestuous[64]; and Moses, that murmured at God's proceedings[65]; and Job, and Jeremy, and Jonas, impatient, even to imprecations against themselves; Christ's own disciples ambitious of worldly preferment; his apostles forsaking him, his great apostle forswearing him; and Mary Magdalen that had been I know not what sinner; and David that had been all; I leave none so ill in this world, but I may carry one that was, or find some that had been as ill as they, in heaven; and that blood of Christ Jesus, which had brought them thither, is offered to them that are here, who may be successors in their repentance, as they are in their sins. And so have you all intended for the person, the comforter, and the action, reproof, and the subject, the world; remains only (that for which there remains but a little time) the time, *When the Comforter comes he will proceed thus.*

We use to note three Advents, three comings of Christ. An advent of humiliation, when he came in the flesh; an advent of

[61] Psal. LXXXIV. 10. [62] Psal. CXIX. 138. [63] Gen. IX. 21.
[64] Gen. XIX. 33. [65] Numb. XI. 11.

glory, when he shall come to judgment; and between these an advent of grace, in his gracious working in us, in this life; and this middlemost advent of Christ, is the advent of the Holy Ghost, in this text; when Christ works in us, the Holy Ghost comes to us. And so powerful is his coming, that whereas he that sent him, Christ Jesus himself, *Came unto his own, and his own received him not*[66]; the Holy Ghost never comes to his own but they receive him; for, only by receiving him, they are his own; for, besides his title of creation, by which we are all his, with the Father, and the Son, as there is a particular title accrued to the Son by redemption, so is there to the Holy Ghost, of certain persons, upon whom he sheds the comfort of his application. The Holy Ghost picks out and chooses whom he will; *spirat ubi vult;* perchance me that speak; perchance him that hears; perchance him that shut his eyes yesternight, and opened them this morning in the guiltiness of sin, and repents it now: perchance him that hath been in the meditation of an usurious contract, of an ambitious supplantation, of a licentious solicitation, since he came hither into God's house, and deprehends himself in that sinful purpose now. This is his advent, this is his pentecost. As he came this day with a manifestation, so, if he come into thee this evening, he comes with a declaration, a declaration in operation. *My Father works even now, and I work*[67], was Christ's answer, when he was accused to have broken the Sabbath-day; that the Father wrought that day as well as he. So also Christ assigns other reasons of working upon the Sabbath[68]; Whose ox is in danger, and the owner will not relieve him? Have you not read how David eat the show-bread[69]? and did not the priests break the Sabbath, in their service in the temple? But the Sabbath is the Holy Ghost's greatest working-day: the Holy Ghost works more upon the Sunday, than all the week. In other days, he picks and chooses; but upon these days of holy convocation, I am surer that God speaks to me, than at home, in any private inspiration. For, as the congregation besieges God in public prayers, *agmine facto*[70], so the Holy Ghost casts a net

[66] John i. 11. [67] John v. 17. [68] Luke xiv. 5.
[69] Matt. xii. 3, 5. [70] Tertullian.

over the whole congregation, in this ordinance of preaching, and catches all that break not out.

If he be come into thee, he is come to reprove thee; to make thee reprove thyself; but do that, *cum venerit*, *when the Holy Ghost is come*. If thou have been slack in the outward acts of religion, and findest that thou art the worse thought of amongst men, for that respect, and the more open to some penal laws, for those omissions, and for these reasons only beginnest to correct, and reprove thyself, this is a reproof, *Antequam Spiritus venerit*, Before the Holy Ghost is come into thee, or hath breathed upon thee, and inanimated thine actions. If the powerfulness, and the piercing of the mercies of thy Saviour, have sometimes, in the preaching thereof, entendered and melted thy heart, and yet upon the confidence of the readiness, and easiness of that mercy, thou return to thy vomit, and to the re-pursuit of those half-repented sins, and thinkest it time enough to go forward upon thy death-bed, this is a reproof *Postquam abierit Spiritus*, After the Holy Ghost is departed from thee. If the burden of thy sins oppress thee, if thou beest ready to cast thyself from the pinnacle of the temple, from the participation of the comforts afforded thee in the absolution, and sacraments of the church, if this appear to thee in a kind of humility, and reverence to the majesty of God, that thou darest not come into his sight, not to his table, not to speak to him in prayer, whom thou hast so infinitely offended, this is a reproof, *Cum Spiritus Sanctus simulatur*, When the Holy Ghost is counterfeited, when Satan is transformed into angel of light, and makes thy dismayed conscience believe, that that affection, which is truly a higher treason against God, than all thy other sins, (which is, a diffident suspecting of God's mercy) is such a reverend fear, and trembling as he looks for.

Reprove thyself; but do it by convincing, not by a downright stupifaction of the conscience; but by a consideration of the nature of thy sin, and a contemplation of the infinite proportion between God and thee, and so between that sin, and the mercy of God; for, thou canst not be so absolutely, so entirely, so essentially sinful, as God is absolutely, and entirely, and essentially merciful. Do what thou canst, there is still some goodness

in thee: that nature that God made, is good still: do God what he will, he cannot strip himself, not divest himself of mercy. If thou canst do as much as God can pardon, thou wert a Manichæan god, a god of evil, as infinite as the God of goodness is. Do it, *cum venerit Spiritus*, when the Holy Ghost pleads on thy side; not *cum venerit homo*, not when man's reason argues for thee, and says, It were injustice in God, to punish one for another, the soul for the body: much less *cum venerit inimicus homo*, when the devil pleads, and pleads against thee, that thy sins are greater than God can forgive. Reprove any over-bold presumption, that God cannot forsake thee, with remembering who it was that said, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Even Christ himself could apprehend a dereliction. Reprove any distrust in God, with remembering to whom it was said, *Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso;* Even the thief himself, who never saw him, never met him, but at both their executions, was carried up with him, the first day of his acquaintance. If either thy cheerfulness, or thy sadness be conceived of the Holy Ghost, there is a good ground of thy *noli timere*, fear neither. So the angel proceeded with Joseph, *Fear not to take Mary, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.* Fear not thou, that a cheerfulness and alacrity in using God's blessings, fear not that a moderate delight in music, in conversation, in recreations, shall be imputed to thee for a fault, for, it is conceived by the Holy Ghost, and is the offspring of a peaceful conscience. Embrace therefore his working, *Qui omnia opera nostra operatus est nobis, Thou, O Lord, hast wrought all our works in us*[71]; and whose working none shall be able to frustrate in us; *Operabitur, et quis avertit? I will work, and who shall let it*[72]? And as the Son concurred with the Father, and the Holy Ghost with the Son, in working in our behalf, so *operemur et nos*, let us also *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*, by reproving the errors in our understanding, and the perversenesses of our conversation, that way, in which the Holy Ghost is our guide, by reproving, that is, chiding and convincing the conscience, but still with comfort, that is, stedfast application of the merits of Christ Jesus.

[71] Isaiah xxvi. 12.

[72] Isaiah lxiii. 13.

# SERMON XXXV.

## *PREACHED UPON WHITSUNDAY.*

JOHN xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

**And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.**
**Of sin, because ye believe not on me.**
**Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.**
**Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged.**

IN a former sermon upon these words, we have established this, that the person whom our Saviour promises here, being by himself promised, in the verse before the text, in the name and quality of *The Comforter*, all that this person is to do in this text, is to be done so, as the *world*, upon which it is to be done, may receive comfort in it. Therefore this word, reproof, admitting a double signification, one by way of authority, as it is a rebuke, an increpation, the other as it is a convincing by argument, by way of instruction, and information, because the first way cannot be applied to all the parts of this text, and to all that the Holy Ghost is to do upon the world, (for, howsoever he may rebuke the world of sin, he cannot be said to rebuke it of righteousness, and of judgment) according to St. Augustine's later interpretation of these words, (for in one place of his works, he takes this word, reproof, in the harder sense, for rebuke, but in another, in the milder) we have and must pursue the second signification of the word, *That the Holy Ghost shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment*, by convincing the world, by making the world confess and acknowledge all that that the Holy Ghost intends in all these. And this manifestation, and this conviction in these three, will be our parts. In the first of which, *That the Holy Ghost shall reprove*, that is, convince, *the world of sin*, we shall first look how all the world is under sin; and then, whether the Holy Ghost, being come, have convinced all the world, made all the world see that it is so; and in these two inquisitions, we shall determine that first branch.

For the first, (for of the other two we shall reach you the boughs anon, when you come to gather the fruit, and lay open the particulars, then when we come to handle them) that all the world is under sin, and knows it not, (for this reproof, *Elenchus*, is, says the philosopher, *Syllogismus contra contraria opinantem*, An argument against him that is of a contrary opinion) we condole first the misery of this ignorance, for, *Quid miserius misero, non miserante seipsum*[1]? What misery can be so great, as to be ignorant, insensible of our own misery? Every act done in such an ignorance as we might overcome, is a new sin; and it is not only a new practice from the devil, but it is a new punishment from God; *Insisti Domine, et sic est, ut pœna sit sibi omnis inordinatus animus*[2], Every sinner is an executioner upon himself; and he is so by God's appointment, who punishes former sins with future. This then is the miserable state of the world. It might know, and does not, that it is wholly under an inundation, a deluge of sin. For, sin is a transgression of some law which he that sins may know himself to be bound by: for, if any man could be exempt from all law, he were impeccable, he could not sin; and if he could not possibly have any knowledge of the law, it were no law to him.

Now under the transgression of what law lies all the world? For the positive laws of the states in which we live, a man may keep them, according to the intention of them that made those laws; which is all that is required in any human law; (to keep it, if not according to the letter, yet according to the intention of the law-maker) nay it is not only possible, but easy to do so: *Angusta innocentia ad legem bonum esse*, (says the moral man's Holy Ghost, Seneca) it is but a narrow and shallow honesty, to be no honester than the law forces him to be. Thus then, in violating the laws of the state, all the world is not under sin.

If we pass from laws merely human, (though, in truth, scarce any just law is so, merely human, for God, that commands obedience to human laws, hath a hand in the making of them) to those ceremonial, and judicial laws, which the Jews received immediately from God, (in which respect they may be called

[1] Augustine. [2] Augustine.

divine laws, though they were but local and but temporary) which were in such a number, as that, though penal laws in some states be so many, and so heavy, as that they serve only for snares, and springes upon the people, yet they are nowhere equal to the ceremonial and judicial laws, which lay upon the Jews; yet even for these laws St. Paul says of himself[3], *That touching that righteousness which is in the law, he was blameless.* Thus therefore (in violating ceremonial or judicial laws) all the world is not under sin, both because all the world was not bound by that law, and some in the world did keep it.

But in two other respects it is; first, that there is a law of nature that passes through all the world, a law in the heart; and of the breach of this, no man can be always ignorant. As every man hath a devil in himself, *Spontaneum dæmonem*[4], A devil of his own making, some particular sin that transports him, so every man hath a kind of God in himself, such a conscience, as sometimes reproves him. Carry we this consideration a little higher, and we may see herein, some verification, at least, some useful application of Origen's extreme error. He thought, that at last, after infinite revolutions, (as all other substances should be) even the devil himself should be (as it were) sucked and swallowed into God, and there should remain nothing at last, (as there was nothing else at first) but only God; (not by an annihilation of the creature, that anything should come to nothing, but by this absorption, by a transmigration of all creatures into God, that God should be all, and all should be God) so in our case, that which is the sinner's devil, becomes his God; that very sin which hath possessed him, by the excess of that sin, or, by some loss, or pain, or shame following that sin, occasions that reproof and remorse, that withdraws him from that sin. So all the world is under sin, because they have a law in themselves, and a light in themselves.

And it is so in a second respect, that all being derived from Adam, Adam's sin is derived upon all. Only that one man, that was not naturally deduced from Adam, Christ Jesus, was guilty of no sin; all others are subject to that malediction, *Væ genti*

[3] Phil. iii. 6. [4] Chrysostom.

*peccatrici*[5], Woe to this sinful world. God made man *Inexterminabilem*, says the wise man[6], undisseisible, unexpellible; such, as he could not be thrust out of his immortality, whether he would or no: for, that was man's first immortality, *Posse non mori*[7], that he needed not have died. When man killed himself, and threw upon all his posterity the *Morte morieris*, That we must die, and that death is *Stipendium peccati*, *The wages of sin*, and that *Anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur*, that *That soul, and only that soul that sins, shall die*[8], since we see the punishment fall upon all, we are sure the fault cleaves to all too; all do die, therefore all do sin. And though this original sin that overflows us all, may in some sense be called *peccatum involuntarium*, a sin without any elicit act of the will, (for so it must needs be in children) and so properly no sin, yet as all our other faculties were, so *Omnium voluntates in Adam*[9], All our wills were in Adam, and we sinned wilfully, when he did so, and so original sin is a voluntary sin: our will is poisoned in the fountain; and, as soon as our will is able to exercise any election, we are willing to sin, as soon as we can, and sorry we can sin no sooner, and sorry no longer: we are willing before the devil is willing, and willing after the devil is weary, and seek occasions of tentation, when he presents none. And so, as the breach of the law of nature, and as the deluge of original sin hath surrounded the whole world, the whole world is under sin.

That all the world is so, requires not much proof: but then, does the Holy Ghost, by his coming, reprove, that is, convince the whole world, that it is so? The Holy Ghost is able to do it, and he hath good cause to do it; but does he do it? Is this *cum venerit, when he comes*, come? Is he come to this purpose, to make all the world know their sinful condition? God knows they know it not. Howsoever they may have some knowledge of the breach of the law of nature, yet they have no knowledge of any remedy after, and so lack all comfort; and therefore this is no knowledge from the Holy Ghost, from the Comforter. And for the knowledge of original sin, which lies more heavy upon them than upon us, (who have the ease of baptism, which slack-

[5] Isaiah i. 4. [6] Wisd. ii. 23. [7] Augustine.
[8] Ezek. xviii. 4. [9] Augustine.

ens, and weakens original sin in us) they are so far from knowing, that that sin is derived from Adam, as that they do not know, that they themselves are derived from Adam; not that there is such a sin, not that there was such an Adam. How then doth the Holy Ghost, who is come according to Christ's promise, according to his promise, *reprove*, that is, convince *the world of sin*, since this (being to be done by the Holy Ghost) implies a knowledge of Christ, and a way of comfort in the doing thereof?

This one word *arguet, he shall reprove*, convince, admits three acceptations. First, in the future, as it is here presented, *he shall;* and so the *cum venerit, when he comes*, signifies *antequam abierit*, before he departs. He came at Pentecost, and presently set on foot his commission, by the apostles, to reprove, convince the world of sin, and hath proceeded ever since, by their successors, in reducing nation after nation; and, before the consummation of the world, before he retire, to rest eternally in the bosom of the Father and the Son, from whom he proceeded, he shall reprove the whole world of sin, that is, bring them to a knowledge, that in the breach of the law of nature, and in the guiltiness of original sin, they are all under a burden, which none of them all, of themselves, can discharge. This work St. Paul seems to hasten sooner: to convince the Jews of their infidelity, he argues thus, *Have not they heard the Gospel*[10]? They, that is, the Gentiles; and if they, much more you: and that they had heard it, he proves by the application of those words, *Their voice is gone through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*[11], that is, the voice of the apostles, in the preaching of the Gospel.

Hence grew that distraction, and perplexity which we find in the fathers, whether it could be truly said, that the Gospel had been preached over all the world in those times. If we number the fathers, most are of that opinion, that before the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, this was fulfilled. Of those that think the contrary, some proceed upon reasons ill grounded; particularly Origen; *Quid de Britannis et Germanis, qui nec adhuc audierunt verbum Evangelii?* What shall we say of Britain, and Germany, who have not heard of the Gospel yet? For, before

[10] Romans x. 18. [11] Psal. xix. 3.

Origen's time, (though Origen were one thousand four hundred years since) in what darkness soever he mistook us to be, we had a blessed and a glorious discovery of the Gospel of Christ Jesus in this island. St. Hierome, who denies this universal preaching of the Gospel before the destruction of the temple, yet doubts not but that the fulfilling of that prophecy was then in action, and in a great forwardness; *Jam completum, aut brevi cernimus complendum;* Already we see it performed, says he; or, at least so earnestly pursued, as that it must necessarily, very soon be performed: *Nec puto aliquam remanere gentem, quæ Christi nomen ignorat;* I do not think, (says that father, more than one thousand two hundred years since) that there is any nation that hath not heard of Christ; *Et quanquam non habuerit prædicatorem, ex vicinis*, &c. If they have not had express preachers themselves, yet from their neighbours they have had some echoes of this voice, some reflections of this light.

The later divines, and the school, that find not this early, and general preaching over the world, to lie in proof, proceed to a more safe way, that there was then *odor Evangelii*, a sweet savour of the Gospel issued, though it were not yet arrived to all parts: as if a plentiful and diffusive perfume were set up in a house, we would say the house were perfumed, though that perfume were not yet come to every corner of the house. But not to thrust the world into so narrow a strait, as it is, when a *decree* is said to have gone out from Augustus, *to tax all the world*[12], (for this was but the Roman world) nor, *That there were men dwelling at Jerusalem, devout men, of every nation under heaven*[13], (for this was but of nations discovered, and traded withal then) nor, when St. Paul says[14], *That the faith of the Romans was published to the world*, (for that was as far as he had gone) those words of our Saviour[15], *This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come*, have evermore, by all, ancient and modern, fathers and schools, preachers and writers, expositors and controverters, been literally understood, that before the end of the world, the Gospel shall be actually, really, evidently, effectually preached to all nations;

[12] Luke ii. 1. [13] Acts ii. 5. [14] Rom. xi. 18.
[15] Matt. xxiv. 14.

and so, *cum venerit*, *when the Holy Ghost comes*, that is, *antequam abierit*, before he go, he shall reprove, convince the whole world of sin, and this, as he is a comforter, by accompanying their knowledge of sin, with the knowledge of the Gospel, for the remission of sins.

It agrees with the nature of goodness to be so diffusive, communicable to all. It agrees with the nature of God, who is goodness, That as all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened[16], and so came the flood over all, so there should be *diluvium Spiritus*, a flowing out of the Holy Ghost upon all, as he promises, I will pour it out upon all[17], and *diluvium gentium*, that all nations should flow up unto him[18]. For this Spirit, *Spirat ubi vult*[19], breathes where it pleases him; and though a natural wind cannot blow east and west, north and south together, this Spirit at once breathes upon the most contrary dispositions, upon the presuming, and upon the despairing sinner; and, in an instant can denizen and naturalize that soul that was an alien to the covenant, empale and inlay that soul that was bred upon the common, amongst the Gentiles, transform that soul, which was a goat, into a sheep, unite that soul which was a lost sheep to the fold again, shine upon that soul that sits in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and so melt and pour out that soul that yet understands nothing of the Divine nature, nor of the Spirit of God, that it shall become partaker of the Divine nature[20], and be the same spirit with the Lord. When Christ took our flesh, he had not all his ancestors of the covenant; he was pleased to come of Ruth, a Moabite, a poor stranger; as he came, so will the Holy Ghost go to strangers also. Shall any man murmur, or draw into disputation, why this Spirit doth not breathe in all nations at once? or why not sooner than it doth in some? Doth this Spirit fall and rest upon every soul in this congregation now? May not one man find that he receives him now, and suffer him to go away again? May not another who felt no motion of him now, recollect himself at home, and remember something then, which hath been said now, to the quickening of this Spirit in him there? Since the Holy Ghost

[16] Gen. vii. 11. [17] Joel ii. 28. [18] Isaiah ii. 2.
[19] John iii. 8. [20] 2 Pet. i. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 17.

visits us so, successively, not all at once, not all with an equal establishment, we may safely embrace that acceptation of this word *arguet*, he shall, he will, *antequam abierit*, before the end come, *reprove*, convince the whole world of sin, by this his way, the way of comfort, the preaching of the Gospel. And that is the first acceptation thereof.

The second acceptation of the word is in the present; not *arguet, he shall*, but *arguit, he doth*, now he doth reprove all the world. As when the devil confessed Christ in the Gospel, as when Judas, (who was the devil's devil, for he had sold Christ to the chief priests, Matt. xxvi. 14, before Satan entered into him after the sop, John xiii. 27,) professed this Gospel, this was not *Sine omni impulsu Spiritus Sancti*, Altogether without the motion of the Holy Ghost, who had his ends, and his purposes therein, to draw testimonies for Christ out of the mouths of his adversaries; so when a natural man comes to be displeased with his own actions, and to discern sin in them, though his natural faculties be the instruments in these actions, yet the Holy Ghost sets this instrument in tune, and makes all that is music and harmony in the faculties of this natural man. At Ephesus St. Paul found certain disciples which were baptized, and when he asked them, *Whether they had received the Holy Ghost*, they said, *That they had not so much as heard that there was a Holy Ghost*[21]. So certainly, infinite numbers of men, in those unconverted nations, have the Holy Ghost working in them, though they have never so much as heard that there is a Holy Ghost. When we see any man do any work well, that belongs to the hand, to write, to carve, to play, to do any mechanic office well, do we determine our consideration only upon the instrument, the hand, do we only say, He hath a good, a fit, a well-disposed hand for such a work, or do we not rather raise our contemplation to the soul, and her faculties, which enable that hand to do that work? So certainly when a moral man hath any reproof, any sense of sin in himself, the Holy Ghost is the intelligence that moves in that sphere, and becomes the soul of his soul, and works that in him primarily, of which, natural faculties, or philosophical instructions, are but ministerial instruments and suppletory assist-

[21] Acts xix. 2.

ances after. And not only in the beginning of good actions, but in the prosecution of some evil, the Holy Ghost hath an interest, though we discern him not: in the disposing of our sins, the Holy Ghost hath a working thus, that when we intended some mischievous sin to-morrow, a less sin, some sin of pleasure meets us, and takes hold of us, and diverts us from our first purpose, and so the Holy Ghost rescues us from one sin, by suffering us to fall into another. What action soever hath any degree of good, what action soever hath any less evil in it than otherwise it would have had, hath received a working of the Holy Ghost, though that man upon whom he hath wrought, knew not his working, nor his name. As we think that we have the differences of seasons, of winter and summer, by the natural motion of the sun, but yet it is not truly by that natural motion, but by a contrary motion of a higher sphere, which draws the sun against his natural course; (for, if the sun were left to himself, we should not have these seasons) so if the soul and conscience of a mere natural man have any of these reproofs, and remorses, though perchance fear, or shame, or sickness, or penalties of law, yea though a weariness, and excess of the sin itself, may seem to him to be the thing that reproves him, and that occasions this remorse, because it is the most immediate, and therefore most discernible; yet there is *digitus Dei*, the hand of God, and *spiritus Spiritus Sancti*, the breath of the Holy Ghost, in all this, who, as a liberal alms-giver, sends to persons that never know who sends, works upon persons who never know who works. So the Holy Ghost reproves all the world of sin; that is, all the reproof, which even the natural man hath, (and every man hath some at some times) is from the Holy Ghost; and, as in the former sense, the *cum venerit*, *when he comes*, was *antequam abierit*, before he goes, so here the *cum venerit*, is *quia adest*, because he is always present, and always working.

And then there is a third acceptation, where the *arguet* is not in the future, that he shall do it, nor in the present, *arguit*, that he doth it now in every natural man, but it is in the time past, *arguit*, he hath done it, done it already. And here in this sense, it is not that the Holy Ghost shall bring the Gospel before the end, to all nations, that is, *antequam abierit*, nor that the Holy

Ghost doth exalt the natural faculties of every man in all his good actions, that is, *quia semper adest*, but it is, that he hath infused and imprinted in all their hearts, whom he hath called effectually to the participation of the means of salvation in the true church, a constant and infallible assurance, that all the world, that is, all the rest of the world which hath not embraced those helps, lies irrecoverably (by any other means than these which we have embraced) under sin, under the weight, the condemnation of sin. So that the comfort of this reproof (as all the reproofs of the Holy Ghost in this text, are given by him in that quality, as he is *the Comforter*) is not directly, and simply, and presently upon all the world indeed, but upon those whom the Holy Ghost hath taken out of this world, to his world in this world, that is, to the Christian church, them he *reproves*, that is, convinces them, establishes, delivers them from all scruples, that they have taken the right way, that they, and only they, are delivered, and all the world beside are still under sin.

When the Holy Ghost hath brought us into the ark from whence we may see all the world without, sprawling and gasping in the flood, (the flood of sinful courses in the world, and of the anger of God) when we can see this violent flood, (the anger of God) break in at windows, and there devour the licentious man in his sinful embracements, and make his bed of wantonness his deathbed; when we can see this flood, (the anger of God) swell as fast as the ambitious man swells, and pursue him through all his titles, and at last suddenly, and violently wash him away in his own blood, not always in a vulgar, but sometimes in an ignominious death; when we shall see this flood (the flood of the anger of God) overflow the valley of the voluptuous man's gardens, and orchards, and follow him into his arbours, and mounts and terraces, and carry him from thence into a bottomless sea, which no plummet can sound, (no heavy sadness relieve him) no anchor take hold of, (no repentance stay his tempested and weather-beaten conscience) when we find ourselves in this ark, where we have first taken in the fresh water of baptism, and then the bread, and wine, and flesh, of the body and blood of Christ Jesus, then are we reproved, forbidden all scruple, then are we convinced, that as the *twelve apostles shall sit upon twelve*

*seats, and judge the twelve tribes at the last day;* so doth the Holy Ghost make us judges of all the world now, and enables us to pronounce that sentence, That all but they, who have sincerely accepted the Christian religion, are still *sub peccato*, under sin, and without remedy. For we must not weigh God with leaden, or iron, or stone weights, how much land, or metal, or riches he gives one man more than another, but how much grace in the use of these, or how much patience in the want, or in the loss of these, we have above others. When we come to say, *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God; they are brought down and fallen, but we are risen, and stand upright*[22]. *Obligati sunt, et ceciderunt*, they are pinioned and fallen, fettered, and manacled, and so fallen; fallen and there must lie: *nos autum erecti*, we are risen, and enabled to stand, now we are up. When we need not fear the mighty, nor envy the rich, *quia signatum super nos lumen vultus tui Domine*, because *the light of thy countenance O Lord, is* (not only shed, but) *lifted up upon us, quia dedisti lætitiam in corde nostro*, because *thou hast put gladness in our heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased;* when we can thus compare the Christian church with other states, and spiritual blessings with temporal, then hath the Holy Ghost throughly reproved us, that is, absolutely convinced us, that there is no other foundation but Christ, no other name for salvation but Jesus, and that all the world but the true professors of that name, are still under sin, under the guiltiness of sin. And these be the three acceptations of this word, *arguet*, he shall carry the Gospel to all before the end, *arguit*, he does work upon the faculties of the natural man every minute, and *arguit* again, he hath manifested to us, that that they who go not the same way, perish. And so we pass to the second reproof and conviction, *He shall reprove the world, de justitia, of righteousness.*

This word, *justificare, to justify*, may be well considered three ways; first as it is *verbum vulgare*, as it hath an ordinary and common use; and then as it is *verbum forense*, as it hath a civil and a legal use; and lastly, as it is *verbum ecclesiasticum*, as it

[22] Psalm xx. 7.

hath a church use, as it hath been used amongst divines. The first way, to justify, is to aver, and maintain anything to be true, as we ordinarily say to that purpose, I will justify it; and in that sense the Psalmist says, *Justificata judicia Domini in semetipso, The judgments of the Lord justify themselves*[23], prove themselves to be just: and in this sense men are said to justify God, *The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God, but all the people, and the Publicans justified God*[24], that is, testified for him. In the second way, as it is a judicial word, to justify is only a verdict of not guilty, and a judgment entered upon that, that there is not evidence enough against him, and therefore he is justified, that is, acquitted. In this sense is the word in the Proverbs, *He that justified the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord*[25]. Now neither of these two ways are we justified; we cannot be averred to be just; God himself cannot say so of us; of us, as we are we: *Non justificabo impium, I will not justify the wicked*[26]. God will not say it, God cannot do it; a wicked man cannot be, he cannot, by God, be said to be just; they are incompatible, contradictory things. Nor the second way neither; consider us standing in judgment before God, no man can be acquitted for want of evidence; *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for, in thy sight shall none that liveth be justified*[27]. For, if we had another soul to give the devil, to bribe him, to give no evidence against this, if we had another iron to sear up our consciences against giving of evidence against ourselves then, yet who can take out of God's hands those examinations, and those evidences, which he hath registered exactly, as often as we have thought, or said, or done anything offensive to him?

It is therefore only in the third sense of this word, as it is *verbum ecclesiasticum*, a word which St. Paul, and the other Scriptures, and the church, and ecclesiastical writers have used to express our righteousness, our justification by: and that is only by the way of pardon, and remission of sins, sealed to us in the blood of Christ Jesus; that what kind of sinners soever we were before, yet that is applied to us, such and such you were

[23] Psalm xix. 9. [24] Luke vii. 29. [25] Prov. xvii. 14.
[26] Exod. xxiii. 7. [27] Psal. cxliii. 2.

before, *But ye are justified by the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*[28]. Now the reproof of the world, the convincing of the world, the bringing of the world to the knowledge, that as they are all *sub peccato*, under sin, by the sin of another, so there is a righteousness of another, that must prevail for all their pardons, this reproof, this convincing, this instruction of the world is thus wrought: that the whole world consisting of Jews and Gentiles, when the Holy Ghost had done enough for the convincing of both these, enough for the overthrowing of all arguments, which could either be brought by the Jew for the righteousness of the law, or by the Gentile for the righteousness of works, (all which is abundantly done by the Holy Ghost, in the epistles of St. Paul, and other Scriptures) when the Holy Ghost had possessed the church of God of these all-sufficient Scriptures, then the promise of Christ was performed, and then, though all the world were not presently converted, yet it was presently convinced by the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Ghost had provided in those Scriptures, of which he is the author, that nothing could be said in the world's behalf, for any other righteousness, than by way of pardon in the blood of Christ.

Thus much the Holy Ghost tells us; and if we will search after more than he is pleased to tell us, that is to rack the Holy Ghost, to over-labour him, to examine him upon such interrogatories, as belongs not to us, to minister unto him. Curious men are not content to know, that our debt is paid by Christ, but they will know farther, whether Christ have paid it with his own hands, or given us money to pay it ourselves; whether his righteousness, before it do us any good, be not first made ours by imputation, or by inhesion; they must know whose money, and then what money, gold or silver, whether his active obedience in fulfilling the law, or his passive obedience in shedding his blood. But all the commission of the Holy Ghost here, is, *To reprove the world of righteousness*, to convince all sects in the world, that shall constitute any other righteousness, than a free pardon by the incorruptible, and invaluable, and inexhaustible blood of Christ Jesus. By that pardon, his righteousness is ours: how it is made so, or by what name we shall call our title, or estate, or

[28] 1 Cor. vi. 11.

interest in his righteousness, let us not inquire. The terms of satisfaction in Christ, of acceptation in the Father, of imputation to us, or inhesion in us, are all pious and religious phrases, and something they express; but yet none of these, satisfaction, acceptation, imputation, inhesion, will reach home to satisfy them, that will needs inquire, *quo modo*, by what means Christ's righteousness is made ours. This is as far as we need go, *Ad eundem modum justi sumus coram Deo, quo coram eo Christus fuit peccator*, so as *God made Christ sin for us, we are made the righteousness of God in him*[29]: so; but how was that? He that can find no comfort in this doctrine, till he find how Christ was made sin, and we righteousness, till he can express *quo modo*, robs himself of a great deal of peaceful refreshing, which his conscience might receive, in tasting the thing itself in a holy and humble simplicity, without vexing his own, or other men's consciences, or troubling the peace of the church with impertinent and inextricable curiosities.

Those questions are not so impertinent, but they are in a great part unnecessary, which are moved about the cause of our righteousness, our justification. Alas, let us be content that God is the cause, and seek no other. We must never slacken that protestation, that good works are no cause of our justification. But we must always keep up a right signification of that word, cause. For, faith itself is no cause; no such cause, as that I can merit heaven, by faith. What do I merit of the king, by believing that he is the undoubted heir to all his dominions, or by believing that he governs well, if I live not in obedience to his laws? If it were possible to believe aright, and yet live ill, my faith should do me no good. The best faith is not worth heaven; the value of it grows *expecto*, that God hath made that covenant, that contract, *crede et vives*, only believe and thou shalt be safe. Faith is but one of those things, which in several senses are said to justify us. It is truly said of God, *Deus solus justificat*, God only justifies us; *efficienter*, nothing can effect it, nothing can work towards it, but only the mere goodness of God. And it is truly said of Christ, *Christus solus justificat*, Christ only justifies us; *materialiter*, nothing enters into the substance and body of the ransom for our sins, but the obedience of Christ. It is also truly

[29] 2 Cor. v. 21.

said, *Sola fides justificat*, Only faith justifies us; *instrumentaliter*, nothing apprehends, nothing applies the merit of Christ to thee, but thy faith. And lastly it is as truly said, *Sola opera justificant*, Only our works justify us: *declaratorie*, only thy good life can assure thy conscience, and the world, that thou art justified. As the efficient justification, the gracious purpose of God had done us no good, without the material satisfaction, the death of Christ had followed; and as that material satisfaction, the death of Christ would do me no good, without the instrumental justification, the apprehension by faith; so neither would this profit without the declaratory justification, by which all is pleaded and established. God enters not into our material justification, that is only Christ's; Christ enters not into our instrumental justification, that is only faith's; faith enters not into our declaratory justification, (for faith is secret) and declaration belongs to works. Neither of these can be said to justify us alone, so, as that we may take the chain in pieces, and think to be justified by any one link thereof; by God without Christ, by Christ without faith, or by faith without works; and yet every one of these justifies us alone, so, as that none of the rest enter into that way and that means, by which any of these are said to justify us.

Consider we then ourselves, as men fallen down into a dark and deep pit; and justification as a chain, consisting of these four links, to be let down to us, and let us take hold of that link that is next us, a good life, and keep a fast and inseparable hold upon that; for though in that sense of which we spoke, *fides justificat sola*, only faith shall justify, yet it is not true in any sense, *fides est sola*, that there is any faith, where there is nothing but faith. God comes downward to us; but we must go upward to God; not to get above him in his unrevealed decrees, but to go up towards him, in laying hold upon that lowest link; that as the Holy Ghost shall reprove, that is, convince the world, that there is no other righteousness but that of Christ, so he may enable you to pass a judgment upon yourselves, and to testify to the world that you have apprehended that righteousness; which is that that is principally intended in the third and last part, *That the Holy Ghost, when he comes, shall reprove the world*, as *of sin, and of righteousness*, so *of judgment*.

After those two convictions of the world, that is, Jew, and Gentile, first, that they are all under sin, and so in a state of condemnation; and secondly, that there is no righteousness, no justification to be had to the Jew by the law, nor to the Gentile by nature, but that there is righteousness, and justification enough for all the world, Jew and Gentile, in Christ; in the third place, the Holy Ghost is to reprove, that is, still to convince the world, to acquaint the world with this mystery, that there is a means settled to convey this righteousness of Christ upon the world, and then an account to be taken of them, who do not lay hold upon this means; for both these are intended in this word *judgment*, he shall reprove them, prove to them this double signification of judgment; first, that there is a judgment of order, of rectitude, of government, to which purpose he hath established the church; and then a judgment of account, and of sentence, and beatification upon them, who did; and malediction upon them who did not apply themselves to the first judgment, that is, to those orderly ways and means of embracing Christ's righteousness, which were offered them in the church. God hath ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight[30]; *Let all things be done decently and in order, for, God is the God of order, and not of confusion*[31]. And this order is this judgment; the court, the tribunal, the judgment seat in which all men's consciences and actions must be regulated and ordered, the church. The perfectest order was innocency; that first integrity in which God made all. All was disordered by sin: for, in sin, and the author of sin, Satan, there is no order, no conformity; nothing but disorder, and confusion. Though the school do generally acknowledge a distinction of orders in the ministering spirits of heaven, now, angels and archangels, and others, yet they dispute, and doubt, and (in a great part) deny that this distinction of orders was before the fall of those angels; for, they confess this distribution into orders, to have been upon their submission, and recognition of God's government, which recognition was their very confirmation, and after that they could not fall. And though those fallen angels, the devils, concur in an unanimous consent to ruin us, (for, *Bellum dæmonum, summa pax hominum*[32]) we should agree

[30] Wisdom xi. 20. [31] 1 Cor. xiv. 40. [32] Hieron.

better, if devils did fall out, yet this is not such a peace, such an unity, as gives them any peace, or relaxation, or intermission of anguish, but, as they are the authors of our confusion, so they are in a continual confusion themselves.

There is no order in the author of sin; and therefore the God of order cannot, directly nor indirectly, positively nor consecutively, be the author of sin. There is no order in sin itself. The nature, the definition of sin, is disorder. *Dictum, factum, concupitum contra legem*[33]; God hath ordered a law, and sin is an act; if we cannot do that, it is a word; if we dare not do that, it is a desire against that law. *Forma peccati, deformitas;* we can assign sin no other form, but deformity. So that our affecting of anything, as our end, which God hath not proposed for our end; or our effecting of true ends, by any other ways than he hath proposed, this is a disordering of God's providence, as much as we can, and so a sin. For the school resolves conveniently, probably, that that first sin that ever was committed, (that *peccatum prægnans, peccatum prolificum*, that womb and matrice of all sins that have been committed since) the sin of the angels, it was a disorder, an obliquity, a deformity, not in not going to the right end, (for, *Illud quæsiverunt, ad quod pervenissent, si stetissent*, says Aquinas out of St. Augustine, They desired no more than they were made for, and should have come to, if they had stood) but their sin was in affecting a right end a wrong way, in desiring to come to their appointed perfection by themselves, to subsist of themselves, and to be independent, without any farther need of God, for that was their desire, *to be like the Most High*, to depend upon nothing, but be all-sufficient to themselves. So they disordered God's purpose; and when they had once broke that chain, when they had once put that harmony out of tune, then came in disorder, discord, confusion, and that is sin.

*God's work is perfect;* how appears that? *For all his ways are judgment*, says Moses in his victorious song[34]. This is perfection, that he hath established an order, a judgment. Which is not only that order which St. Augustine defines, *Ordo est, per quem omnia aguntur, quæ Deus constituit*, The order and the

[33] Augustine. [34] Deut. xxxii. 4.

judgment by which God governs the world, according to his purpose, (which judgment is Providence) but (as the same father says in the same book) it is *Ordo, quem si tenueris in vita, perducet ad Deum*, It is an order and a judgment which he hath manifested to thee, (for the order and judgment of his providence, he doth not always manifest) by obedience to which order and judgment, thou mayest be saved. The same father speaking of this order and judgment of Providence, says, *Nihil ordini contrarium*, Nothing can be contrary to that order; he is in a holy rapture transported with that consideration, that even disorders are within God's order; there is in the order and judgment of his providence an admission, a permission of disorders: this unsearchable proceeding of God, carries him to that passionate exclamation, *O si possem dicere quod vellem!* O that I were able to express myself! *Rogo, ubi ubi estis verba, succurrite;* Where, where are those words which I had wont to have at command? Why do ye not serve me, help me now? Now, when I would declare this, *Bona et mala sunt in ordine*, That even disorders are done in order, that even our sins some way or other fall within the providence of God. But that is not the order, nor judgment which the Holy Ghost is sent to manifest to the world. The Holy Ghost works best upon them, which search least into God's secret judgments and proceedings. But the order and judgment we speak of, is an order, a judgment-seat established, by which every man, howsoever oppressed with the burden of sin, may, in the application of the promises of the Gospel by the ordinance of preaching, and in the seals thereof in the participation of the sacraments, be assured, that he hath received his absolution, his remission, his pardon, and is restored to the innocency of his baptism, nay to the integrity which Adam had before the fall, nay to the righteousness of Christ Jesus himself. In the creation God took red earth, and then breathed a soul into it: when Christ came to a second creation, to make a church, he took earth, men, red earth, men made partakers of his blood; (for, *Ecclesiam quæsivit, et acquisivit*[35], He desired a church, and he purchased a church; but by a blessed way of simony; *Adde medium acquisitionis, sanguine acquisivit, He purchased a church*

[35] Bernard.

*with his own blood*[36]) and when he had made this body, in calling his apostles, then he breathed the soul into them, his Spirit, and that made up all: *Quod insufflavit Dominus apostolis, et dixit, accipite Spiritum Sanctum, ecclesiæ potestas collata est*[37], Then when Christ breathed that Spirit into them, he constituted the church. And this power of remission of sins, is that order, and that judgment which Christ himself calls by the name of the most orderly frame in this, or the next world, a kingdom, *Dispono vobis regnum, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*[38].

Now, *Faciunt favos et vespæ, faciunt ecclesias et Marcionitæ*[39], As wasps make combs, but empty ones, so do heretics churches, but frivolous ones, ineffectual ones. And, as we told you before, that errors and disorders are as well in ways, as in ends, so may we deprive ourselves of the benefit of this judgment, the church, as well in circumstances, as in substances, as well in opposing discipline, as doctrine. The Holy Ghost *reproves thee*, convinces thee, *of judgment*, that is, offers thee the knowledge that such a church there is; a Jordan to wash thine original leprosy in baptism; a city upon a mountain, to enlighten thee in the works of darkness; a continual application of all that Christ Jesus said, and did, and suffered, to thee. Let no soul say, she can have all this at God's hands immediately, and never trouble the church; that she can pass her pardon between God and her, without all these formalities, by a secret repentance. It is true, beloved, a true repentance is never frustrate: but yet, if thou wilt think thyself a little church, a church to thyself, because thou hast heard it said, that thou art a little world, a world in thyself, that figurative, that metaphorical representation shall not save thee. Though thou beest a world to thyself, yet if thou have no more corn, nor oil, nor milk, than grows in thyself, or flows from thyself, thou wilt starve; though thou be a church in thy fancy, if thou have no more seals of grace, no more absolution of sin, than thou canst give thyself, thou wilt perish. *Per solam ecclesiam sacrificium libenter accipit Deus*[40]: Thou mayest be a sacrifice in thy chamber, but God receives a sacrifice more cheerfully at

[36] Acts xx. 28. [37] Augustine. [38] Luke xxii. 29.
[39] Tertullian. [40] Gregory.

church. *Sola, quæ pro errantibus fiducialiter intercedit*, Only the church hath the nature of a surety; howsoever God may take thine own word at home, yet he accepts the church in thy behalf, as better security. Join therefore ever with the communion of saints; *Et cum membrum sis ejus corporis, quod loquitur omnibus linguis, crede te omnibus linguis loqui*[41], Whilst thou art a member of that congregation, that speaks to God with a thousand tongues, believe that thou speakest to God with all those tongues. And though thou know thine own prayers unworthy to come up to God, because thou liftest up to him an eye, which is but now withdrawn from a licentious glancing, and hands which are guilty yet of unrepented uncleannesses, a tongue that hath but lately blasphemed God, a heart which even now breaks the walls of this house of God, and steps home, or runs abroad upon the memory, or upon the new plotting of pleasurable or profitable purposes, though this make thee think thine own prayers ineffectual, yet believe that some honester man than thyself stands by thee, and that when he prays with thee, he prays for thee; and that, if there be one righteous man in the congregation, thou art made the more acceptable to God by his prayers; and make that benefit of this reproof, this conviction of the Holy Ghost, that he convinces thee *de judicio*, assures thee of an orderly church established for thy relief, and that the application of thyself to this judgment, the church, shall enable thee to stand upright in that other judgment, the last judgment, which is also enwrapped in the signification of this word of our text, *judgment*, and is the conclusion for this day.

As God begun all with judgment, (for he made all things in measure, number, and weight[42]) as he proceeded with judgment, in erecting a judicial seat for our direction, and correction, the church, so he shall end all with judgment, the final, and general judgment, at the resurrection; which he that believes not, believes nothing; not God; for, *He that cometh to God* (that makes any step towards him) *must believe, Deum remuneratorem*, God, and God in that notion, as he is a rewarder[43]; therefore there is judgment. But was this work left for the Holy Ghost? Did not the natural man that knew no Holy Ghost, know this?

[41] Augustine. [42] Wisdom xi. [43] Heb. xi. 6.

Truly, all their fabulous divinity, all their mythology, their Minos, and their Rhadamanthus, tasted of such a notion, as a judgment. And yet the first planters of the Christian religion found it hardest to fix this root of all other articles, *That Christ should come again to judgment.* Miserable and froward men! They would believe it in their fables, and would not believe it in the Scriptures; they would believe it in the nine muses, and would not believe it in the twelve apostles; they would believe it by Apollo, and they would not believe it by the Holy Ghost; they would be saved poetically, and fantastically, and would not reasonably, and spiritually; by copies, and not by originals; by counterfeit things at first deduced by their authors, out of our Scriptures, and yet not by the word of God himself. Which Tertullian apprehends and reprehends in his time, when he says, *Præscribimus adulteris nostris*, We prescribe above them, which counterfeit our doctrine, for we had it before them, and they have but rags, and those torn from us. *Fabulæ immissæ, quæ fidem infirmarent veritatis;* They have brought part of our Scriptures into their fables, that all the rest might seem but fables too. *Gehennam prædicantes et judicium, ridemur, decachinnamur.* They laugh at us when we preach of hell, and judgment, *Et tamen Elysii campi fidem præoccupaverunt*, And yet they will needs be believed when they talk of their Elysian fields. *Fideliora nostra, quorum imagines fidem inveniunt*, Is it not safer trusting to our substance, than their shadows; to our doctrine of the judgment, in the Scriptures, than their allusions in their poets?

So far Tertullian considers this; but to say the truth, and all the truth, howsoever the Gentiles had some glimmering of a judgment, that is, an account to be made of our actions after this life, yet of this judgment which we speak of now, which is a general judgment of all together, and that judgment to be executed by Christ, and to be accompanied with a resurrection of the body, of this, the Gentiles had no intimation, this was left wholly for the Holy Ghost to manifest. And of this, all the world hath received a full convincing from him, because he hath delivered to the world those Scriptures, which do so abundantly, so irrefragably establish it. And therefore, *Memorare novissima*

*et non peccabis;* Remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss[44]. *Non dicitur memorare primordia, aut media*[45]; If thou remember the first reproof, that all are under sin, that may give occasion of excusing, or extenuating, how could I avoid that, that all men do? If thou remember the second reproof, that there is a righteousness communicable to all that sin, that may occasion so bold a confidence, since I may have so easy a pardon, what haste of giving over yet? But *memorare novissima*, consider that there is a judgment, and that that judgment is the last thing that God hath to do with man, consider this, and thou wilt not sin, not love sin, not do the same sins tomorrow thou didst yesterday, as though this judgment were never the nearer, but that as a thousand years are as one day with God, so thy threescore years should be as one night with thee, one continual sleep in the practice of thy beloved sin. Thou wilt not think so, if thou remember this judgment.

Now, in respect of the time after this judgment, (which is eternity) the time between this and it cannot be a minute; and therefore think thyself at that tribunal, that judgment now: where thou shalt not only hear all thy sinful works, and words, and thoughts repeated, which thou thyself hadst utterly forgot, but thou shalt hear thy good works, thine alms, thy coming to church, thy hearing of sermons given in evidence against thee, because they had hypocrisy mingled in them; yea thou shalt find even thy repentance to condemn thee, because thou madest that but a door to a relapse. There thou shalt see, to thine inexpressible terror, some others cast down into hell, for thy sins; for those sins which they would not have done, but upon thy provocation. There thou shalt see some that occasioned thy sins, and accompanied thee in them, and sinned them in a greater measure than thou didst, taken up into heaven, because in the way, they remembered the end, and thou shalt sink under a less weight, because thou never lookedst towards him that would have eased thee of it. *Quis non cogitans hæc in desperationis rotetur abyssum*[46]? Who can once think of this and not be tumbled

[44] Ecclus vii. 36. [45] Bernard. [46] Bernard.

into desperation? But who can think of it twice, maturely, and by the Holy Ghost, and not find comfort in it, when the same light that shows me the judgment, shows me the Judge too? knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men[47]; but knowing the comforts too, we importune men to this consideration, that as God precedes with judgment in this world, to give the issue with the temptation, and competent strength with the affliction, as the wise man expresses it[48], That God punishes his enemies with deliberation, and requesting, (as our former translation had it) and then with how great circumspection will he judge his children; so he gives us a holy hope, that as he hath accepted us in this first judgment, the church, and made us partakers of the word and sacraments there, so he will bring us with comfort to that place, which no tongue but the tongue of St. Paul, and that moved by the Holy Ghost, could describe, and which he does describe so gloriously, and so pathetically, *You are come unto Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than the blood of Abel*[49]. And into this blessed and inseparable society, the Father of lights, and God of all comfort, give you an admission now, and an irremovable possession hereafter, for his only Son's only sake, and by the working of his blessed Spirit, whom he sends to work in you, *This reproof of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.* Amen.

[47] 1 Cor. v. 15. [48] Wisd. xii. 21. [49] Heb. xii. 22.

# SERMON XXXVI.

***PREACHED UPON TRINITY SUNDAY.***

2 Corinthians i. 3.

**Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.**

There was never army composed of so many several nations, the tower of Babel itself, in the confusion of tongues, gave not so many several sounds, as are uttered and mustered against God, and his religion. The atheist denies God: for, though David call it a foolish thing to do so, (*The fool hath said it in his heart*) and though David speak it in the singular number, *the fool*, as though there were not many so very fools, as *to say*, and *to say in their heart, There is no God*, yet some such fools there are, that say it in their very heart, and have made shift to think so indeed; but for such fools as say it in their actions, that is, that live as though there were no God, *stultorum plena sunt omnia;* we have seen fools in the court, and fools in the cloister, fools that take no calling, and fools in all callings that can be taken, fools that hear, and fools that preach, fools at general councils, and fools at council-tables, *stultorum plena sunt omnia*, such fools as deny God, so far, as to leave him out, are not in David's singular number, but superabound in every profession: so that David's manner of expressing it, is not so much singular, as though there were but one, or few such fools, but emphatical, because that fool, that any way denies God, is the fool, the veriest fool of all kinds of foolishness.

Now, as God himself, so his religion amongst us hath many enemies; enemies that deny God, as atheists; and enemies that multiply gods, that make many gods, as idolaters; and enemies that deny those divers persons in the Godhead, which they should confess, the Trinity, as Jews and Turks: so in his religion, and outward worship, we have enemies that deny God his house, that deny us any church, any sacrament, any priesthood, any salvation, as papists; and enemies that deny God's house any

furniture, any stuff, any beauty, any ornament, any order, as nonconformitans; and enemies that are glad to see God's house richly furnished for awhile, that they may come to the spoil thereof, as sacrilegious usurpers of God's part. But for atheistical enemies, I call not upon them here, to answer me; let them answer their own terrors, and horrors alone at midnight, and tell themselves whence that proceeds, if there be no God. For papistical enemies, I call not upon them to answer me; let them answer our laws as well as our preaching, because theirs is a religion mixed as well of treason, as of idolatry. For our refractory, and schismatical enemies, I call not upon them to answer me neither; let them answer the church of God, in what nation, in what age was there ever seen a church, of that form, that they have dreamt, and believe their own dream? And for our sacrilegious enemies, let them answer out of the body of story, and give one example of prosperity upon sacrilege.

But leaving all these to that which hath heretofore, or may hereafter be said of them, I have bent my meditations, for those days, which this term will afford, upon that, which is the character and mark of all Christians in general, the Trinity, the three persons in one God; not by way of subtle disputation, as to persons that doubted, but by way of godly declaration, as to persons disposed to make use of it; not as though I feared your faith needed it, nor as though I hoped I could make your reason comprehend it, but because I presume, that the consideration of God the Father, and his power, and the sins directed against God, in that notion, as the Father; and the consideration of God the Son, and his wisdom, and the sins against God, in that apprehension, the Son; and the consideration of God the Holy Ghost, and his goodness, and the sins against God, in that acceptation, may conduce as much, at least, to our edification, as any doctrine more controverted. And of the first glorious person of this blessed Trinity, the Almighty Father, is this text, *Blessed be God*, &c.

In these words, the apostle having tasted, having been fed with the sense of the power, and of the mercies of God, in his gracious deliverance, delivers a short catechism of all our duties: so short, as that there is but one action, *benedicamus*, *let us bless:* nor but one object to direct that blessing upon, *benedicamus Deum*, *let us*

*bless God.* It is but one God, to exclude an idolatrous multiplicity of gods, but it is one God notified and manifested to us, in a a triplicity of Persons; of which, the first is literally expressed here, that he is a *Father.* And him we consider *in Paternitate æterna*, as he is the eternal Father, *even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, says our text; and then *in Paternitate interna*, as we have *the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father;* as he is *Pater miserationum, the Father of mercies;* and as he expresses these mercies, by the seal and demonstration of comfort, as he is *the God of comfort*, and *totius consolationis, of all comfort.* Receive the sum of this, and all that arises from it, in this short paraphrase; the duty required of a Christian, is *blessing*, praise, thanksgiving; to whom? To *God*, to God only, to the only God. There is but one; but this one God is such a tree, as hath divers boughs to shadow and refresh thee, divers branches to shed fruit upon thee, divers arms to spread out, and reach, and embrace thee. And here he visits thee as a *Father:* from all eternity a *Father of Christ Jesus*, and now thy Father in him, in that which thou needest most, *a Father of mercy*, when thou wast in misery; and a *God of comfort*, when thou foundest no comfort in this world, and *a God of all comfort*, even of spiritual comfort, in the anguishes, and distresses of thy conscience. *Blessed be God, even the Father*, &c.

First then, the duty which God, by this apostle, requires of man, is a duty arising out of that, which God hath wrought upon him: it is not a consideration, a contemplation of God sitting in heaven, but of God working upon the earth; not in the making of his eternal decree there, but in the execution of those decrees here; not in saying, God knows who are his, and therefore they cannot fail, but in saying in a rectified conscience, God, by his ordinary marks, hath let me know that I am his, and therefore I look to my ways, that I do not fall. St. Paul out of a religious sense what God had done for him, comes to this duty, to bless him.

There is not a better grammar to learn, than to learn how to bless God, and therefore it may be no levity, to use some grammar terms herein. God blesses man *dativè*, he gives good to him; man blesses God *optativè*, he wishes well to him; and he blesses

him *vocativè*, he speaks well of him. For, though towards God, as well as towards man, real actions are called blessings, (so Abigail called the present which she brought to David, *a blessing*[1], and so Naaman called that which he offered to Elisha, *a blessing*[2]) though real sacrifices to God, and his cause, sacrifices of alms, sacrifices of arms, sacrifices of money, sacrifices of sermons, advancing a good public cause, may come under the name of blessing, yet the word here, *εὐλογία*, is properly a blessing in speech, in discourse, in conference, in words, in praise, in thanks. *The dead do not praise thee*, says David; the dead (men civilly dead, allegorically dead, dead and buried in an useless silence, in a cloister, or college, may praise God, but not in words of edification, as it is required here, and they are but dead, and do not praise God so; and *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, of those that delight to praise and bless God, and to declare his goodness.

We represent the angels to ourselves, and to the world with wings, they are able to fly; and yet when Jacob saw them ascending and descending, even those winged angels had a ladder[3], they went by degrees: there is an immediate blessing of God, by the heart, but God requires the tongue too, because that spreads and diffuses his glory upon others too. *Calici benedictionis benedicimus*, says the apostle[4], *The cup which we bless, is a cup of blessing;* when we have blessed it, according to Christ's holy institution, then it derives holy blessings upon us; and when we bless God according to his commandment, he blesses us according to his promise, and our desire. When God employed Moses[5], and when he employed Jeremy[6], Moses and Jeremy had no excuse, but the unreadiness of their tongues: he that hath a tongue disposed to God's service, that will speak all he can, and dares speak all he should to the glory of God, is fit for all. As St. James says, *The tongue is but a little member, but boasteth great things*[7]; so truly, as little as it is, it does great things towards our salvation. The Son of God, is λόγος, *verbum, the word;* God made us with his word, and with our words we make God so far,

[1] 1 Sam. xxv. 27. [2] 2 Kings v. 15. [3] Gen. xxviii. 12.
[4] 1 Cor. x. 16. [5] Exod. vi. 12. [6] Jer. i. 6.
[7] James iii. 5.

as that we make up the mystical body of Christ Jesus with our prayers, with our whole liturgy, and we make the natural body of Christ Jesus appliable to our souls, by the words of consecration in the sacrament, and our souls apprehensive, and capable of that body, by the word preached. Bless him therefore in speaking to him, in your prayers: bless him in speaking with him, in assenting, in answering that which he says to you in his word: and bless him in speaking of him, in telling one another the good things that he hath done abundantly for you. *I will bless the Lord at all times*, says David[8]. Is it at all times, says St. Augustine, *Cum circumfluunt omnia*, at all times, when God blesses me with temporal prosperity? *Cum minus nascuntur, cum nata dilabuntur*, says that father, When thy gain ceases for the present, when that that thou hadst formerly got, wastes and perishes, and threatens penury for the future, still bless thou the Lord, *Quia ille dat, ille tollit, sed seipsum à benedicente se non tollit;* The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, but the Lord never takes away himself from him that delights in blessing his name. Bless, praise, speak; there is the duty, and we have done with that which was our first part: and bless thou God, which is our second part, and a part derived into many branches. *Blessed be God, even*, &c.

Here first we see the object of our praises, whom we must bless, *benedictus sit Deus, God.* First, *solus Deus*, God only, that is, God and not man, and then *Deus solus*, the only God, that is God, and not many gods. God only, and not man; not that we may not bless, and wish well to one another, for there is a blessing from God, belongs to that, *Benedicam benedicentibus tibi*, says God to Abraham[9], *I will bless them that bless thee:* neither is it that we may not bless, that is, give due praise to one another; for as the vices and sins of great persons are not smothered in the Scriptures, so their virtues, and good deeds are published with praise. Noah's drunkenness, and Lot's incest is not disguised, Job's righteousness and holy patience is not concealed neither; *Do that which is good*, says the apostle, *and thou shalt have praise for the same*[10]. Neither is it that we may not bless, that is, pray

[8] Psal. xxxiv. 2. [9] Gen. xii. 3. [10] Rom. xiii. 3.

for one another, of what sort soever; for we are commanded to do that, for our superiors; inferiors may bless superiors too; nor that we should not bless, that is, pray to one another, in petitioning and supplicating our superiors for those things which are committed to their dispensation; for the importunate suitor, the widow, is not blamed in the Gospel for her importunity to the judge[11]; it is true, the judge is blamed, for withholding justice, till importunity extorted it. But to bless, by praise, or prayer, the man without relation to God, that is, the man, and not God in the man, to determine the glory in the person, without contributing thereby to the glory of God, this is a manner of blessing accursed here, because blessing is radically, fundamentally, originally, here reserved to God, to God only, *benedictus sit Deus*, *God be blessed.*

For, properly, truly none is to be thus blessed by us, but he upon whom we may depend and rely: and can we depend and rely upon man? upon what man? upon princes? As far as we can look for examples, round about us, in our next neighbours, and in France, and in Spain, and farther, we have seen in our age kings discarded, and we have seen in some of them, the discarded cards taken in again, and win the game. Upon what man wilt thou rely? upon great persons in favour with princes? Have we not seen often, that the bed-chambers of kings have back doors into prisons, and that the end of that greatness hath been, but to have a greater jury to condemn them? Wilt thou rely upon the prophet, he can teach thee; or upon thy brother, he does love thee; or upon thy son, he should love thee; or the wife of thy bosom, she will say she loves thee; or upon thy friend, he is as thine own soul? yet Moses puts a case when thou must depart from all these, not consent, no not conceal, not pardon, no not reprieve, *Thou shalt surely kill him*, says Moses[12], even this *prophet*, this *brother*, this *son*, this *wife* may incline thee *to the service of other gods;* thou canst not rely, and therefore do not bless, not with praise, not with prayer and dependence upon him, that prophet, by what name or title soever he be called; that brother, how willingly soever he divide the inheritance with thee; that son, how dutiful soever in civil things;

[11] Luke xviii. 5. [12] Deut. xiii.

that wife, how careful soever of her own honour, and thy children; that friend, how free soever of his favours, and of his secrets, that inclines thee to other gods, or to other service of the true God, then is true. Greatness is not the object of this blessing, for greatness is often eclipsed by the way, and at last certainly extinguished in death, and swallowed in the grave. Goodness, as it is moral, is not the object of this blessing; but bless God only; God in the root, in himself, or God exemplified, and manifested in godly men: bless God in them, in whom he appears, and in them who appear for him, and so thou dost bless *solum Deum*, God only.

This thou must do, bless God only, not man, and then the only God, not other gods. For this was the wretched and penurious narrowness to which the Gentiles were reduced, that being unable to consider God entirely, they broke God in pieces, and crumbled, and scattered God into as many several gods, as there are powers in God, nay almost into as many several gods, as there are creatures from God; and more than that, as many gods as they could fancy or imagine in making chimeras of their own; for not only that which was not God, but that which was not at all, was made a god. And then, as in narrow channels that cannot contain the water, the water overflows, and yet that water that does so overflow, flies out and spreads to such a shallowness, as will not bear a boat to any use; so when by this narrowness in the Gentiles, God had overflown this bank, this limitation of God in an unity, all the rest was too shallow to bear any such notion, any such consideration of God, as appertained to him: they could not think him an omnipotent God, when if one god would not, another would, nor an infinite God, when they had appeals from one god to another; and without omnipotence, and without infiniteness they could not truly conceive a God. They had cantoned a glorious monarchy into petty states, that could not subsist of themselves, nor assist another, and so imagined a god for every state and every action, that a man must have applied himself to one god when he shipped, and when he landed to another, and if he travelled farther, change his god by the way, as often as he changed coins, or post-horses. But, *Hear O*

*Israel, the Lord thy God is one God*[13]. As though this were all that were to be heard, all that were to be learned, they are called to *hear*, and then there is no more said but that, *the Lord thy God is one God.*

There are men that will say and swear, they do not mean to make God the author of sin; but yet when they say, that God made man therefore, that he might have something to damn, and that he made him sin therefore, that he might have something to damn him for, truly they come too near making God the author of sin, for all their modest protestation of abstaining. So there are men that will say and swear, they do not mean to make saints gods: but yet when they will ask the same things at saints' hands, which they do at God's, and in the same phrase and manner of expression, when they will pray the Virgin Mary to assist her Son, nay to command her Son, and make her a chancellor to mitigate his common law, truly they come too near making more gods than one. And so do we too, when we give particular sins dominion over us; *Quot vitia, tot Deos recentes*, says Hierome: as the apostle says, *Covetousness is idolatry*, so, says that father, is voluptuousness, and licentiousness, and every habitual sin. *Non alienum* says God, *Thou shalt have no other God but me*, but, *Quis similis*, says God too, *Who is like me?* He will have nothing made like him, not made so like a god as they make their saints, nor made so like a god, as we make our sins. We think one king sovereign enough, and one friend counsellor enough, and one wife helper enough, and he is strangely insatiable, that thinks not one God, God enough: especially, since when thou hast called this God what thou canst, he is more than thou hast said of him. *Cum definitur, ipse sua definitione crescit*[14]; When thou hast defined him to be the God of justice, and tremblest, he is more than that, he is the God of mercy too, and gives thee comfort. When thou hast defined him to be all eye, he sees all thy sins, he is more than that, he is all patience, and covers all thy sins. And though he be in his nature incomprehensible, and inaccessible in his light, yet this is his infinite largeness, that being thus infinitely one, he hath manifested him-

[13] Deut. vi. 4. [14] Hilary.

self to us in three Persons, to be the more easily discerned by us, and the more closely and effectually applied to us.

Now these notions that we have of God, as a Father, as a Son, as a Holy Ghost, as a Spirit working in us, are so many handles by which we may take hold of God, and so many breasts, by which we may suck such a knowledge of God, as that by it we may grow up into him. And as we cannot take hold of a torch by the light, but by the staff we may; so though we cannot take hold of God, as God, who is incomprehensible, and inapprehensible, yet as a Father, as a Son, as a Spirit, dwelling in us, we can. There is nothing in nature that can fully represent and bring home the notion of the Trinity to us. There is an elder book in the world than the Scriptures; it is not well said, in the world, for it is the world itself, the whole book of creatures; and indeed the Scriptures are but a paraphrase, but a comment, but an illustration of that book of creatures. And therefore though the Scriptures only deliver us the doctrine of the Trinity, clearly, yet there are some impressions, some obumbrations of it, in nature too. Take but one in ourselves, in the soul. The understanding of man (that is as the Father) begets discourse, ratiocination, and that is as the Son; and out of these two proceed conclusions, and that is as the Holy Ghost. Such as these there are many, many sprinkled in the school, many scattered in the fathers, but, God knows, poor and faint expressions of the Trinity. But yet, *Præmisit Deus naturam magistram, submissurus et prophetiam*[18], Though God meant to give us degrees in the university, that is, increase of knowledge in his Scriptures after, yet he gave us a pedagogy, he sent us to school in nature before; *ut facilius credas prophetiæ discipulus naturæ*, that coming out of that school, thou mightest profit the better in that university, having well considered nature, thou mightest be established in the Scriptures.

He is therefore inexcusable, that considers not God in the creature, that coming into a fair garden, says only, Here is a good gardener, and not, here is a good God; and when he sees any great change, says only, This is a strange accident, and not a strange judgment. Hence it is, that in the books of the Platonic

[18] Tertullian.

philosophers, and in others, much ancienter than they, (if the books of Hermes Trismegistus and others, be as ancient as is pretended in their behalf) we find as clear expressing of the Trinity, as in the Old Testament, at least; and hence is it, that in the Talmud of the Jews, and in the Alcoran of the Turks, though they both oppose the Trinity, yet when they handle not that point, there fall often from them, as clear confessions of the three Persons, as from any of the elder of those philosophers, who were altogether disinterested in that controversy.

But because God is seen *per creaturas, ut per speculum, per verbum ut per lucem*, in the creature, and in nature, but by reflection, in the Word, and in the Scriptures, directly, we rest in the knowledge which we have of the plurality of the Persons, in the Scriptures; and because we are not now in a congregation that doubts it, nor in a place to multiply testimonies, we content ourselves (being already possessed with the belief thereof) with this illustration from the Old Testament, that the name of our one God, is expressed in the plural number, in that place, which we mentioned before, where it is said, *The Lord thy God is one God*[16], that is, *Elohim, unus Dii*, one Gods. And though as much as that seem to be said by God to Moses, *Eris Aaroni in Elohim, Thou shalt be as Gods to Aaron*[17]; yet that was because Moses was to represent God, all God, all the Persons in God, and therefore it might as well be spoken plurally of Moses, so, as of God. But because it is said, *Gods appeared unto Jacob*[18]; and again, *Dii Sancti ipse est, He is the Holy Gods*[19]; and so also, *Ubi Deus factores mei? Where is God my Makers*[20]? And God says of himself, *Faciamus hominem*, and *Factus est sicut unus ex nobis, God says, Let us make man*[21], and *he says, Man is become as one of us*[22], we embrace humbly, and thankfully, and profitably, this, shall we call it *effigiationem ansarum*, this making out of handles? or *protuberationem mammarum*, this swelling out of breasts? or *germinationem gemmarum*, this putting forth of buds, and blossoms, and fruits, by which we may apprehend, and see, and taste God himself, so as his wisdom hath chosen to communicate himself to us, in the notion and manifestation of divers

[16] Deut. vi. 4. [17] Exod. iv. 16. [18] Gen. xxxv. 7. [19] Josh. xxiv. 19. [20] Job. xxxv. 10. [21] Gen. i. 26. [22] Gen. iii. 22.

Persons? Of which in this text, we lay hold on him, by the first handle, by the name of Father. *Blessed be God, even the Father*, &c.

Now we consider in God, a two-fold paternity, a two-fold fatherhood: one, as he is Father to others, another as to us. And the first is two-fold too: one essentially, by which he is a Father by creation, and so the name of *Father* belongs to all the three Persons in the Trinity, for, *There is one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*[23], which is spoken of God gathered into his essence, and not diffused into persons. In which sense, the Son of God, Christ Jesus, is called Father, *Unto us a Son is given, and his name shall be the everlasting Father*[24]: and to this Father, even to the Son of God, in this sense, are the faithful made sons, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*[25], says Christ to the paralytic, and *Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole*[26], says to the woman with the bloody issue; thus Christ is a Father; and thus *per filiationem vestigii*, by that imperession of God, which is in the very being of every creature, God, that is, the whole Trinity, is the Father of every creature, as in Job, *Quis pluviæ Pater? Hath the rain a Father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew*[27]? and so in the prophet, *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us*[28]? But the second paternity is more mysterious in itself, and more precious to us, as he is a Father, not by creation, but by generation, *Even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Now, *Generationem istam quis enarrabit?* Who shall declare this generation? Who shall tell us how it was? Who was there to see it[29]? Since the first-born of all creatures, the angels, who are almost six thousand years old, (and much elder in the opinion of many of the fathers, who think the angels to have been created long before the general creation) since, I say, these angels are but in their swathing clouts, but in their cradle, in respect of this eternal generation, who was present? *Quis enarrabit?* Who shall tell us how it was? Who shall tell us when it was, when it was so long before any time was, as that, when time shall be no more, and that, after an end of time, we shall have lived infinite

[23] Eph. iv. 6. [24] Isaiah ix. 6. [25] Matt. ix. 2. [26] Mark v. 34.
[27] Job xxx. 28. [28] Mal. ii. 10. [29] Isaiah liii. 8.

millions of millions of generations in heaven, yet this generation of the Son of God, was as long before that immortal life, as that immortality, and everlastingness shall be after this life? It cannot be expressed, nor conceived how long our life shall be after, nor how long this generation was before.

This is that Father, that hath a Son, and yet is no elder than that Son, for he is *a Patre*, but not *post Patrem*[80], but so from the Father, as he is not after the Father: he hath from him *principium originale*, but not *initiale*[81], a root from whence he sprung, but no spring-time, when he sprung out of that root. *Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Wherefore blessed? *Quia potuit?* Because he could have a Son? *non generavit potentia, sed natura;* God did not beget this Son because he had always a power to do so; for then, if this Son had ever been but *in potentia*, only in such a condition, as that he might have been, then this had been an eternal generation, for if they were a time, when only he might have been, at that time he was not. He is not blessed then because he could, is he blessed (that is, to be blessed by us) because he would beget this Son? *Non generavit voluntate, sed natura:* God did not beget this Son, then when he would, that is, had a will to do so, for, if his will determined it, now I will do it, then till that, there had been no Son, and so this generation had not been eternal neither. But when it was, or how it was, *Tu ratiocinare, ego mirer*, says St. Augustine, Let others discourse it, let me admire it; *Tu disputa, ego credam*, Let others dispute it, let me believe it. And when all is done, you have done disputing, and I have done wondering, that that brings it nearer than either, is this, that there is a paternity, not by creation, by which Christ and the Holy Ghost are Fathers too, nor by generation, by which God is, though inexpressibly, the Father even of our Lord Jesus Christ, but by adoption, as in Christ Jesus, he is Father of us all, notified in the next appellation, *Pater miserationum, The Father of mercies.*

In this alone, we discern the whole Trinity: here is the *Father*, and here is *mercy*, which mercy is in the Son; and the effect of this mercy, is *the Spirit of adoption, by which also we cry*,

[80] Nazian. [81] Biel.

*Abba, Father*[83] too. When Christ would pierce into his Father, and melt those bowels of compassion, he enters with that word, *Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; take away this cup from me*[84]. When Christ apprehended an absence, a dereliction on God's part, he calls not upon him by this name, not *My Father*, but *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*[85]? But when he would incline him to mercy, mercy to others, mercy to enemies, he comes in that name, wherein he could be denied nothing, Father; *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*[86]. He is *the Lord of hosts;* there he scatters us in thunder, transports us in tempests, enwraps us in confusion, astonishes us with stupefaction, and consternation; *the Lord of hosts*, but yet *the Father of mercies*, there he receives us into his own bowels, fills our emptiness, with the blood of his own Son, and incorporates us in him; *the Lord of hosts*, but *the Father of mercy*. Sometimes our natural fathers die, before they can gather any state to leave us, but he is the immortal Father, and all things that are, as soon as they were, were his. Sometimes our natural fathers live to waste, and dissipate that state which was left them, to be left us: but this is the Father, out of whose hands, and possession nothing can be removed, and who gives inestimably, and yet remains inexhaustible. Sometimes our natural fathers live to need us, and to live upon us: but this is that Father whom we need every minute, and requires nothing of us, but that poor rent of *Benedictus sit*, Blessed, praised, glorified be this Father.

This Father of mercies, of *mercies* in the plural; David calls God, *Misericordiam suam*, His mercy; all at once: *God is the God of my mercy*[86]: God is all ours, and all mercy. *Pardon this people*, says Moses, *Secundum magnitudinem misericordiæ, According to the greatness of thy mercy*[87]. Pardon me, says David, *Have mercy upon me, Secundum multitudinem misericordiarum, According to the multitude of thy mercies*[88]: his mercy, in largeness, in number, extends over all; it was his mercy that we were made, and it his mercy that we are not consumed. David calls his

[83] Rom. viii. 15. [84] Mark xiv. 36. [85] Matt. xxvii. 37. [86] Luke xxiii. 24.
[86] Psalm lix. 17. [87] Numb. xiv. 19. [88] Psalm li. 1.

mercy, *multiplicatam*, and *mirificatam*, It is manifold, and it is marvellous, miraculous: *Show thy marvellous loving kindness*[39]; and therefore David in several places, carries it *super judicium*, above his judgments, *super cœlos*, above the heavens, *super omnia opera*, above all his works. And for the multitude of his mercies, (for we are now upon the consideration of the plurality thereof, *Pater miserationum*, *Father of mercies*) put together that which David says, *Ubi misericordiæ tuæ antiquæ? Where are thy ancient mercies*[40]? His mercy is as ancient, as *the ancient of days*, who is God himself, and that which another prophet says, *Omni mane*, *His mercies are new every morning*, and put between these two, between God's former, and his future mercies, his present mercy, in bringing thee this minute to the consideration of them, and thou hast found *multiplicatam*, and *mirificatam*, manifold, and wondrous mercy.

But carry thy thoughts upon these three branches of his mercy, and it will be enough. First, that upon Adam's fall, and all ours in him, he himself would think of such a way of mercy, as from Adam, to that man whom Christ shall find alive at the last day, no man would ever have thought of, that is, that to show mercy to his enemies, he would deliver his own, his only, his beloved Son, to shame, to torments, to death: that he would plant *germen Jehovæ in semine mulieris*, the blossom, the branch of God, in the seed of the woman: this mercy, in that first promise of that Messiah, was such a mercy, as not only none could have undertaken, but none could have imagined but God himself: and in this promise, we were conceived *in visceribus Patris*, in the bowels of this Father of mercies. In these bowels, in the womb of this promise we lay four thousand years; the blood with which we were fed then, was the blood of the sacrifices, and the quickening which we had there, was an inanimation, by the often refreshing of this promise of that Messiah in the prophets. But *in the fulness of time*, that infallible promise came to an actual performance, *Christ came in the flesh*, and so, *veniμus ad partum*, in his birth we were born; and that was the second mercy; in the promise, in the performance, he is *Pater miserationum*, *Father of mercies*. And then there is a

[39] Psalm xvii. 7. [40] Psalm lxxxix. 50.

third mercy, as great, that he having sent his Son, and having re-assumed him into heaven again, he hath sent his Holy Spirit to govern his church, and so becomes a Father to us, in that adoption, in the application of Christ to us, by the Holy Ghost; and this is that which is intended in the last word, *Deus totius consolationis, The God of all comfort.*

I may know that there is a Messiah promised, and yet be without comfort, in a fruitless expectation; the Jews are so in their dispersion. When the Jews will still postdate the comings of Christ, when some of them say, There was no certain time of his coming designed by the prophets; and others, There was a time, but God for their sins prorogued it; and others again, God kept his word, the Messiah did come when it was promised he should come, but for their sins, he conceals himself from manifestation; when the Jews will postdate his first coming, and the Papists will antedate his second coming, in a coming that cannot become him, that he comes, even to his saints in torment, before he comes in glory, that when he comes to them at their dissolution, at their death, he comes not to take them to heaven, but to cast them into one part of hell, that the best comfort which a good man can have at his death, is but purgatory, *Miserable comforters are they all.* How fair a beam of the joys of heaven is true comfort in this life? If I know the mercies of God exhibited to others, and feel them not in myself, I am not of David's church, not of his choir, *I cannot sing of the mercies of God*[41]. I may see them, and I may sigh to see the mercies of God determined in others, and not extended to me; but I cannot sing of the mercies of God, if I find no mercy. But when I come to that, *Consolationes tuæ lætificaverunt, In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul*[42], then the true Comforter is descended upon me, and the *Holy Ghost* hath *over-shadowed* me, and all that shall be *born* of me, and proceed from me, shall be *holy. Blessed are they that mourn*[43], says Christ: but the blessedness is not in the mourning, but because *they shall be comforted.* Blessed am I in the sense of my sins, and in the sorrow for them, but blessed therefore, because this sorrow leads me to my recon-

[41] Psalm LXXXIX. 1. [42] Psalm XCIV. 19. [43] Matt. V. 4.

ciliation to God, and the consolation of his Spirit. Whereas, if I sink in this sorrow, in this dejection of spirit, though it were wine in the beginning, it is lees, and tartar in the end; inordinate sorrow grows into sinful melancholy, and that melancholy, into an irrecoverable desperation. The Wise-men of the East, by a less light, found a greater, by a star, they found the Son of glory, Christ Jesus: but by darkness, nothing: by the beams of comfort in this life, we come to the body of the sun, by the rivers, to the ocean, by the cheerfulness of heart here, to the brightness, to the fulness of joy hereafter. For, beloved, salvation itself being so often presented to us in the names of glory, and of joy, we cannot think that the way to that glory is a sordid life affected here, an obscure, a beggarly, a negligent abandoning of all ways of preferment, or riches, or estimation in this world, for the glory of heaven shines down in these beams hither; neither can men think, that the way to the joys of heaven, is a joyless severeness, a rigid austerity; for as God loves a cheerful giver, so he loves a cheerful taker, that takes hold of his mercies and his comforts with a cheerful heart, not only without grudging, that they are no more, but without jealousy and suspicion that they are not so much, or not enough.

But they must be his comforts that we take in, God's comforts. For, to this purpose, the apostle varies the phrase; it was *The Father of mercies;* to represent to us gentleness, kindness, favour, it was enough to bring it in the name of *Father;* but this *comfort*, a power to erect and settle a tottering, a dejected soul, an overthrown, a bruised, a broken, a trodden, a ground, a battered, an evaporated, an annihilated spirit, this is as an act of such might, as requires the assurance, the presence of God. God knows, all men receive not comforts, when other men think they do, nor are all things comforts to them, which we present, and mean should be so. Your father may leave you his inheritance, and little knows he the little comfort you have in this, because it is not left to you, but to those creditors to whom you have engaged it. Your wife is officious to you in your sickness, and little knows she, that even that officiousness of hers then, and that kindness, aggravates that discomfort, which lies upon thy soul, for those injuries which thou hadst formerly multiplied

against her, in the bosom of strange women. Except the God of comfort give it, in that seal, in peace of conscience, *Nec intus, nec subtus, nec circa te occurrit consolatio*, says St. Bernard; *Non subtus*, not from below thee, from the reverence and acclamation of thy inferiors; *non circa*, not from about thee, when all places, all preferments are within thy reach, so that thou mayest lay thy hand, and set thy foot where thou wilt; *non intus*, not from within thee, though thou have an inward testimony of a moral constancy, in all afflictions that can fall, yet not from below thee, not from about thee, not from within thee, but from above must come thy comfort, or it is mistaken. St. Chrysostom notes, and Areopagita had noted it before him, *Ex beneficiis acceptis nomina Deo affingimus*, We give God names according to the nature of the benefits which he hath given us: so when God had given David victory in the wars, by the exercise of his power, then, *Fortitudo mea*, and *firmamentum*, *The Lord is my rock, and my castle*[44]: when God discovered the plots and practices of his enemies to him, then *Dominus illuminatio*, *The Lord is my light, and my salvation*[45]. So whensoever thou takest in any comfort, be sure that thou have it from him that can give it; for this God is *Deus totius consolationis*, *The God of all comfort*.

*Preciosa divina consolatio, nec omnino tribuitur admittentibus alienam*[46]: The comforts of God are of a precious nature, and they lose their value, by being mingled with baser comforts, as gold does with alloy. Sometimes we make up a sum of gold, with silver, but does any man bind up farthing tokens, with a bag of gold? Spiritual comforts which have always God's stamp upon them, are his gold, and temporal comforts, when they have his stamp upon them, are his silver, but comforts of our own coining, are counterfeit, are copper. Because I am weary of solitariness, I will seek company, and my company shall be, to make my body the body of a harlot: because I am drowsy, I will be kept awake, with the obscenities and scurrilities of a comedy, or the drums and ejulations of a tragedy: I will smother and suffocate sorrow, with hill upon hill, course after course at a voluptuous feast, and drown sorrow in excess of wine, and call that

[44] Psalm xviii. 2. [45] Psalm xxvii. 1. [46] Bernard.

sickness, health; and all this is no comfort, for *God is the God of all comfort*, and this is not of God. We cannot say with any colour, as Esau said to Jacob, *Hast thou but one blessing, my father*[47]? For he is the God of all blessings, and hath given every one of us, many more than one. But yet Christ hath given us an abridgment, *Unum est necessarium*[48], There is but one only thing necessary, and David, in Christ, took knowledge of that before, when he said, *Unum petii, One thing have I desired of the Lord*[49], what is that one thing? All in one; *That I may dwell in the house of the Lord* (not be a stranger from his covenant) *all the days of my life*, (not disseised, not excommunicate out of that house) *To behold the beauty of the Lord*, (not the beauty of the place only) but to *inquire in his temple*, (by the advancement and advantage of outward things, to find out him) and so I shall have true comforts, outward, and inward, because in both, I shall find him, who is the God of all comfort.

Jacob thought he had lost Joseph his son, *And all his sons, and all his daughters rose up to comfort him*[50], *Et noluit consolationem*, says the text, *He would not be comforted*, because he thought him dead. *Rachel wept for her children and would not be comforted, because they were not*[51]. But what ailest thou? Is there anything of which thou canst say, It is not? Perchance it is, but thou hast it not: if thou hast him, that hath it, thou hast it. Hast thou not wealth, but poverty rather, not honour, but contempt rather, not health, but daily summons of death rather yet? *Nonne omnia possidet, cui omnia cooperantur in bonum*[52]? If thy poverty, thy disgrace, thy sickness have brought thee the nearer to God, thou hast all those things, which thou thinkest thou wantest, because thou hast the best use of them. *All things are yours*, says the apostle[53]; Why? by what title? *For you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Carry back your comfort to the root, and bring that comfort to the fruit, and confess, that God who is both, is *the God of all comfort.* Follow God in the execution of this good purpose upon thee, to thy vocation, and hear him, who hath left east, and west, and north, and south, in

[47] Gen. xvii. 38. [48] Luke x. 42. [49] Psalm xxvii. 4.
[50] Gen. xxxvii. 35. [51] Matt. ii. 18. [52] Bernard.
[53] 1 Cor. iii. 23.

their dimness, and dumbness, and deafness, and hath called thee to a participation of himself in his church. Go on with him to thy justification, that when in the congregation one sits at thy right hand, and believes but historically (it may be as true which is said of Christ, as of William the Conqueror, and as of Julius Cæsar) and another at thy left hand, and believes Christ but civilly, (it was a religion well invented, and keeps people well in order) and thou between them believest it to salvation in an applying faith; proceed a step farther, to feel this fire burning out, thy faith declared in works, thy justification grown into sanctification, and then thou wilt be upon the last stair of all, that great day of thy glorification will break out even in this life, and either in the possessing of the good things of this world, thou shalt see the glory, and in possessing the comforts of this world, see the joy of Heaven, or else, (which is another of his ways) in the want of all these, thou shalt have more comfort than others have, or perchance, than thou shouldest have in the possessing of them: for he is *the God of all comfort*, and of all the ways of comfort; and therefore, *Blessed be God, even the Father*, &c.

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## SERMON XXXVII.

### *PREACHED UPON TRINITY SUNDAY.*

### 1 Peter i. 17.

**And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's works, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.**

You may remember, that I proposed to exercise your devotions and religious meditations in these exercises, with words which might present to you, first the several Persons in the Trinity, and the benefits which we receive, in receiving God in those distinct notions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and then with other words which might present those sins, and the danger of those

sins which are most particularly opposed against those several Persons. Of the first, concerning the person of the Father, we spoke last, and of the other, concerning sins against the Father, these words will occasion us to speak now.

It is well noted upon those words of David, *Have mercy upon me, O God*[1], that the word is Elohim, which is Gods in the plural, *Have mercy upon me, O Gods:* for David, though he conceived not divers Gods, yet he knew three divers Persons in that one God, and he knew that by that sin which he lamented in that Psalm, that *peccatum complicatum*, that manifold sin, that sin that enwrapped so many sins, he had offended all those three Persons. For whereas we consider principally in the Father, *potestatem*, power, and in the Son, *sapientiam*, wisdom, and in the Holy Ghost, *bonitatem*, goodness, David had sinned against the Father, in his notion, *in potestate*, in abusing his power, and kingly authority, to a mischievous and bloody end in the murder of Uriah: and he had sinned against the Son, in his notion, *in sapientia*, in depraving and detorting true wisdom into craft and treachery: and he had sinned against the Holy Ghost in his notion, *in bonitate*, when he would not be content with the goodness and piety of Uriah, who refused to take the eases of his own house, and the pleasure of his wife's bosom, as long as God himself in his army lodged in tents, and stood in the face of the enemy. Sins against the Father then, we consider especially to be such as are *in potestate*, either in a neglect of God's power over us, or in an abuse of that power which we have from God over others; and of one branch of that power, particularly of judgment, is this text principally intended, *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth*, &c.

In the words we shall insist but upon two parts, first, a counsel, which in the apostle's mouth is a commandment; and then a reason, an inducement, which in the apostle's mouth is a forcible, an unresistible argument. The counsel, that is, the commandment, is, *If ye call on the Father, fear him*, stand in fear of him: and the reason, that is, the argument, is, the name of Father implies a great power over you, therefore fear him; and amongst other powers, a power of *judging* you, of calling you to an

[1] Psal. LI. 1

account, therefore fear him: in which judgment, this Judge *accepts no persons*, but judges his sons as his servants, and therefore fear him: and then, he judges, not upon words, outward professions, but upon *works*, actions, *according to every man's works*, and therefore fear him: and then as on his part he shall certainly call you to judgment when you go hence, so on your part, certainly it cannot be long before you go hence, for your time is but a *sojourning here*, it is not a dwelling, and yet it is a *sojourning here*, it is not a posting, a gliding through the world, but such a stay, as upon it our everlasting dwelling depends; and therefore that we may make up this circle, and end as we begun, with the fear of God, *pass that time*, that is, all that time, *in fear;* in fear of neglecting and undervaluing, or of over-tempting that great power which is in the Father, and in fear of abusing those limbs, and branches, and beams of that power which he hath communicated to thee, in giving thee power and authority any way over others; for these, to neglect the power of the Father, or to abuse that power which the Father hath given thee over others, are sins against the Father, who is power. *If ye call on the Father*, &c.

First then, for the first part, the counsel, *Si invocatis, If ye call on the Father, in timore*, do it *in fear*, the counsel hath not a voluntary condition, and arbitrary in ourselves annexed to it; if you call, then fear, does not import, if you do not call, you need not fear; it does not import, that if you profess a particular form of religion, you are bound to obey that church, but if you do not, but have fancied a religion to yourself without precedent, or a way to salvation without any particular religion, or a way out of the world without any salvation or damnation, but a going out like a candle, if you can think thus you need not fear, this is not the meaning of this *if* in this place, *If you call on the Father*, &c. But this *if* implies a wonder, an impossibility, that any man should deny God to be the Father: if the author, the inventor of anything useful for this life be called the father of that invention, by the Holy Ghost himself, *Jubal was the father of such as dwell in tents, and Tubal his brother the father of music*[a], and so Horace calls Ennius the *father* of one kind of poem: how abso-

[a] Gen. iv. 20.

lutely is God our Father, who (may I say?) invented us, made us, found us out in the depth, and darkness of nothing at all! He is *Pater*, and *Pater luminum*, *Father*, and *Father of lights*[3], of all kinds of lights. *Lux lucifica*, as St. Augustine expresses it, The light from which all the lights which we have, whether of nature, or grace, or glory, have their emanation. Take these *Lights* of which God is said to be *the Father*, to be the angels, (so some of the fathers take it, and so St. Paul calls them *angels of light*[4]; and so Nazianzen calls them *Secundos splendores primi splendoris administros*, Second lights that serve the first light) or take these *lights* of which God is said to be *the Father* to be the ministers of the Gospel, the angels of the church, (so some fathers take them too, and so Christ says to them, in the apostles, *You are the light of the world*[5],) or take these *lights* to be those faithful servants of God, who have received an illustration in themselves, and a coruscation towards others, who by having lived in the presence of God, in the household of his faithful, in the true church, are become, as John Baptist was, *burning and shining lamps*, (as St. Paul says of the faithful, *You shine as lights in this world*[6], and as Moses had contracted a glorious shining in his face, by his conversation with God) or take this *light* to be a fainter light than that, (and yet that which St. James doth most literally intend in that place) the light of natural understanding, that which Pliny calls *Serenitatem animi*, When the mind of man, disencumbered of all eclipses, and all clouds of passion, or inordinate love of earthly things, is enlightened so far, as to discern God in nature; or take this *light* to be but the light of a shadow, (for *Umbræ non sunt tenebræ, sed densior lux*, Shadows are not darknesses, shadows are but a grosser kind of light) take it to be that shadow, that design, that delineation, that obumbration of God, which the creatures of God exhibit to us, that which Pliny calls *Cœli lætitiam*, When the heavens, and all that they embrace, in an openness and cheerfulness of countenance, manifest God unto us; take these *lights* of which St. James speaks, in any apprehension, any way, angels of heaven who are ministering spirits, angels of the church, who are spiritual ministers, take it

[3] James i. 17.
[4] 2 Cor. xi. 14.
[5] Matt. v. 14.
[6] Phil. ii. 15.

for the light of faith from hearing, the light of reason from discoursing, or the light flowing from the creature to us, by contemplation, and observation of nature, every way, by every light we see, that he is *Pater luminum*, *The Father of lights;* all these lights are from him, and by all these lights we see that he is a Father, and our Father.

So that as the apostle uses this phrase in another place, *Si opertum Evangelium*, *If the Gospel be hid*[7], with wonder and admiration, is it possible, can it be that this Gospel should be hid? So it is here, *Si invocatis*, *If ye call God Father*, that is, as it is certain you do, as it is impossible but you should, because you cannot ascribe to any but him, your being, your preservation in that being, your exaltation in that being to a well-being, in the possession of all temporal, and spiritual conveniences, and then there is thus much more force in this particle *si*, *if*, which is (as you have seen) *si concessionis*, *non dubitationis*, an *if* that implies a confession and acknowledgment, not a hesitation or a doubt, that it is also *si progressionis*, *si conclusionis*, an *if* that carries you farther, and that concludes you at last, *if* you do it, that is, *since* you do it, *since you do call God Father*, since you have passed that act of recognition, since not only by having been produced by nature, but by having been regenerated by the Gospel, you confess God to be your Father, and your Father in his Son, in Christ Jesus: since you make that profession, *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth*[8], if you call him Father, since you call him Father, thus, go on farther, *Timete*, Fear him; *If ye call him Father, fear him*, &c.

Now, for this *fear of God*, which is *the beginning of wisdom*, and the end of wisdom too, we are a little too wise, at least, too subtle, sometimes in distinguishing too narrowly between a filial fear, and a servile fear, as though this filial fear were nothing but a reverend love of God, as he is good, and not a doubt and suspicion of incurring those evils, that are punishments, or that produce punishments. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*[9], it is a holy detestation of that evil which is *Malum culpæ*, The evil of sin, and it is a holy trembling under a tender apprehension of

[7] 2 Cor. iv. 3. [8] James i. 18. [9] Prov. viii. 13.

that other evil, which we call *Malum pœnæ*, The evil of punishment for sin. God presents to us the joys of heaven often to draw us, and as often the torments of hell to avert us. Origen says aright, As Abraham had two sons, one of a bondwoman, another of a free, but yet both sons of Abraham; so God is served by two fears, and the later fear, the fear of future torment, is not the perfect fear, but yet even that fear is the servant, and instrument of God too. *Quis tam insensatus*[10], Who can so absolutely divest all sense, *Qui non fluctuante civitate, imminente naufragio*, But that when the whole city is in a combustion and commotion, or when the ship that he is in, strikes desperately and irrecoverably upon a rock, he is otherwise affected toward God then, than when every day, in a quietness and calm of holy affections, he hears a sermon? *Gehennæ timor* (says the same father) *regni nos affert coronam*, Even the fear of hell gets us heaven. Upon Abraham there fell *A horror of great darkness*[11], and *Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God*[12]. And that way, towards that dejected look, does God bend his countenance; *Upon this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*[13]. As there are both impressions in security, vicious and virtuous, good and bad, so there are both in fear also. There is a wicked security in the wicked, by which they make shift to put off all providence in God, and to think God like themselves, indifferent what becomes of this world; there is an ill security in the godly, when for the time, in their prosperity, they grow ill husbands of God's graces, and negligent of his mercies; *In my prosperity* (says David himself, of himself) *I said, I shall not be moved*[14]. And there is a security of the faithful, a constant persuasion, grounded upon those marks, which God, in his word, hath set upon that state, *That neither height, nor depth, nor any creature shall separate us from God:* but yet this security is never discharged of that fear, which he that said that, had in himself, *I keep under my body, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*[15]; and which he persuades others, how safe soever they

[10] Chrysostom.
[11] Gen. xv. 12.
[12] Exod. iii. 6.
[13] Isaiah lxvi. 12.
[14] Psal. xxx. 6.
[15] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

were, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*[16], and, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*[17].

As then there is a vicious, an evil security; and that holy security which is good, is not without fear: so there is no fear of God, though it have some servility, (so far, as servility imports but a fear of punishment) but it is good. For, *Timor est amor inchoativus*[18], The love of God begins in fear, and then *Amor est timor consummatus*, The fear of God ends in love; which David intends when he says, *Rejoice with trembling*[19]; conceive no such fear as excludes spiritual joy, conceive no such assurance, as excludes an humble and reverential fear. There is a fear of God too narrow, when we think every natural cross, every worldly accident to be a judgment of God, and a testimony of his indignation, which the poet (not altogether in an ill sense) calls a disease of the soul, *Quo morbo mentem concusse? timore Deorum;* he imagines a man may be sick of the fear of God, that is, not distinguish between natural accidents, and immediate judgments of God; between ordinary declarations of his power, and extraordinary declarations of his anger. There is also a fear of God too large, too far extended, when for a false fear of offending God, I dare not offend those men, who pretend to come in his name, and so captivate my conscience to the traditions and inventions of men, as to the word, and law of God. And there is a fear of God conceived, which never quickens, but putrefies in the womb before inanimation; the fear and trembling of the devil, and men whom he possesses, desperate of the mercies of God. But there is a fear acceptable to God, and yet hath in it, a trembling, a horror, a consternation, an astonishment, an apprehension of God's dereliction for a time. The law was given in thundering, and lightening, and the people were afraid[20]. How proceeds Moses with them? *Fear not*, says he, *for God is come to prove you, that his fear might be before your faces.* Here is a *fear not*, that is, fear not with despair, nor with diffidence, but yet therefore, that you may fear the law; for, in this place, the very *law* itself (which is given to direct them) is called *fear;* as in another place, God himself is called *fear*, (as he is in other places called

[16] Phil. ii. 12. [17] 1 Cor. x. 12. [18] Augustine.
[19] Psal. ii. 11. [20] Exod. xx. 20.

*love* too) *Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac*[21]; that is, by him whom his father Isaac feared, as the Chaldee paraphrase rightly expresses it.

Briefly, this is the difference between fearfulness, and fear, (for so we are fain to call *timiditatem* and *timorem*) timidity, fearfulness, is a fear, where no cause of fear is; and there is no cause of fear, where man and man only threatens on one side, and God commands on the other: *Fear not, thou worm of Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel*[22]. Moses's parents had overcome this fearfulness: *They hid him*, says the text[23], *Et non metuerunt edictum regis, They feared not the proclamation of the king*, because it was directly, and evidently, and undisputably against the manifest will of God. Queen Esther had overcome this fearfulness; she had fasted, and prayed, and used all prescribed and all possible means, and then she entered the king's chamber, against the proclamation, with that necessary resolution, *Si peream, peream, If I perish, I perish*[24]; not upon a disobedient, not upon a desperate undertaking, but in a rectified conscience, and well established opinion, that either that law was not intended to forbid her, who was his wife, or that the king was not rightly informed, in that bloody command, which he had given for the execution of all her countrymen. And for those who do not overcome this fearfulness, that is, that fear where no cause of fear is, (and there is no cause of fear, where God's cause is by godly ways promoved, though we do not always discern the ways, by which this is done) for those men that frame imaginary fears to themselves, to the withdrawing or discouraging of others in the service of God, we see where such men are ranked by the Holy Ghost, when St. John says[25], *The unbelieving, the murderer, the whoremonger, the sorcerer, the idolater, shall have their portion in the lake of brimstone, which is the second death:* we see who leads them all into this irrecoverable precipitation, the fearful, that is, he that believes not God in his promises, that distrusts God in his own cause, as soon as he seems to open us to any danger; or distrusts God's instruments, as soon as they go another way, than he would have them go. To end

[21] Gen. xxxi. 53. [22] Isaiah xli. 14. [23] Heb. xi. 23.
[24] Esther iv. 16. [25] Rev. xxi. 8.

this, there is no love of God without fear, no law of God, no God himself without fear; and here, as in very many other places of Scripture, the fear of God is our whole religion, the whole service of God; for here, fear him, includes worship him, reverence him, obey him. Which counsel or commandment, though it need no reason, no argument, yet the apostle does pursue with an argument, and that constitutes our second part.

Now the apostle's arguments grow out of a double root; one argument is drawn from God, another from man. From God, thus implied, if God be a father, fear him, for naturally we acknowledge the power of a father to be great over his children, and consequently the reverent fear of the children great towards him. The father had *potestatem vitæ et necis*, a power over the life of his child, he might have killed his child; but that the child should kill his father, it never entered into the provision of any law, and it was long before it fell into the suspicion of any law-maker. Romulus in his laws, called every manslaughter *Parricidium*, because it was *paris occisio*, he had killed a man, a peer, a creature equal to himself; but for *parricide* in the latter sense, when *parricide* is *patricide*, the killing of a father, it came not into the jealousy of Romulus's law, nor into the heart or hand of any man there in six hundred years after: *Cum lege cæperunt, et facinus pœna monstravit*, says their moral man[26]: That sin began not, till the law forbade it, and only the punishment ordained for it, showed that there might be such a thing. *He that curseth father or mother, shall surely die*, says Moses[27]; and he that is but *stubborn* towards them, shall *die* too[28]. The dutiful love of children to parents is so rooted in nature, that Demosthenes says, It is against the impressions and against the law of nature, for any child ever to love that man, that hath done execution upon his father, though by way of justice: and this natural obligation is not conditioned with the limitations of a good or a bad father, *Natura te non bono patri, sed patri conciliavit*, says that little great philosopher[29], Nature hath not bound thee to thy father, as he is a good father, but merely as he is thy father.

[26] Seneca. [27] Exod. xxi. 17. [28] Deut. xxi. 18.
[29] Epictetus.

Now for the power of fathers over their children, by the law of nations, that is, the general practice of civil states, the father had power upon the life of his child; it fell away by discontinuance, in a great part, and after was abrogated by particular laws, but yet, by a connivance, admitted in some cases too. For, as in nature man is *microcosmus*, a little world, so in nature, a family is a little state, a little commonwealth, and what power the magistrate hath in that, the father hath in this. *Ipsum regnum suapte natura imperium est paternum*[30], The power of a king, if it be kept within the bounds of the nature of that office, is only to be a father to his people: and, *Gratius est nomen pietatis, quam potestatis*[31], Authority is presented in a more acceptable name, when I am called a father, than when I am called a master; and therefore, says Seneca, our ancestors mollified it thus, *Ut invidiam Dominis, contumeliam servis detraherent*, That there might accrue no envy to the master for so great a title, nor contempt upon the servant for so low a title, they called the master *patrem familias*, the father of a household, and they called the servants, *familiares*, parts and pieces of the family. So that in the name of *father* they understand all power; and the first law that passed amongst the Romans against parricides, was *Contra interfectores patrum et dominorum*[32]; They were made equal, fathers and sovereigns: and in the law of God itself, *honour thy father*, we see all the honour, and fear, and reverence that belongs to the magistrate, is conveyed in that name, in that person, the father is all; as in the state of that people, before they came to be settled, both the civil part of the government, and the spiritual part, was all in the father, that father was king and priest over all that family.

Present God to thyself then as a father, and thou wilt fear him; and take knowledge, that the son might not sue the father; enter no action against God why he made thee not richer, nor wiser, nor fairer; no nor why he elects, or refuses, without respect of good or bad works; but take knowledge too, that when by the law, the father might punish the son with death, he might not kill his son before he was passed three years in age, before he was come to some demonstration of an ill, and rebellious nature,

[30] Aristotle. [31] Tertullian. [32] Lex Pompeia.

and disposition: whatsoever God may do of his absolute power, believe that he will not execute that power upon thee to thy condemnation, till thine actual sins have made thee incapable of his love: what he may do, dispute not, but be sure he will do thee no harm if thou fear him, as a Father.

Now to bring that nearer to you, which principally we intended, which is, the consideration and precaution of those sins, which violate this power of God, notified in this name of *Father*, we consider a threefold emanation or exercise of power in this Father, by occasion of a threefold repeating of this part of the text, in the Scripture. The words are weighty, always at the bottom; for we have these words in the last of the prophets, in Malachi, and in the last of the evangelists, in John, and here in this apostle, we have them of the last judgment. In Malachi he says[33], *A son honoureth his father, if then I be a father, where is my honour?* This God speaks there to the priest, to the Levite; for the tribe of Levi had before, (as Moses bade them[34]) consecrated their hands to God, and punished by a zealous execution, the idolatry of the golden calf; and for this service, God fastened the priesthood upon them. But when they came in Malachi's time, to connive at idolatry itself, God, who was himself the root of the priesthood, and had trusted them with it, and they had abused that trust, and the priesthood, then when the *prophet* was become a *fool*, and the *spiritual man*, *mad*[35], or (as St. Hierome reads it) *arreptitius*, that is, possessed by others, God first of all turns upon the priest himself, rebukes the priest, interminates his judgment upon the priest, for God is our high priest. And therefore fear this Father in that notion, in that apprehension, as a priest, as thy high priest, that refuses or receives thy sacrifices, as he finds them conditioned; and if he look narrowly, is able to find some spot in thy purest lamb, some sin in thy holiest action, some deviation in thy prayer, some ostentation in thine alms, some vain glory in thy preaching, some hypocrisy in thy hearing, some concealing in thy confessions, some reservation in thy restitutions, some relapses in thy reconciliations: since thou callest him Father, fear him as thy high priest: so the words have their

[33] Mal. i. 6. [34] Exod. xxxii. 29. [35] Hosea ix. 7.

force in Malachi, and they appertain *ad potestatem sacerdotalem*, to the power of the priest, despise not that.

And then, in the second place, which is in St. John[36], Christ says, *If God were your Father, you would love me:* and this Christ speaks to the Pharisees, and to them, not as sectaries in religion, but as to persons in authority, and command in the state, as to rulers, to governors, to magistrates; so Christ says to Pilate[37], *Thou couldst have no power to all against me, except it were given thee from above:* and so St. Paul[38], *There is no power but of God, the powers that be, be ordained of God.* Christ then charges the Pharisees, that they having the secular power in their hands, they went about to kill him, when he was doing the will of his Father, who is the root, as of priesthood, so of all civil power, and magistracy also. Fear this Father then, as the civil sword, the sword of justice is in his hand. He can open thee to the malicious prosecutions of adversaries, and submit thee to the penalties of those laws, which, in truth, thou hast never transgressed: thy fathers, thy grandfathers have sinned against him, and thou hast been but reprieved for two sessions, for two generations, and now mayest come to execution. Thou hast sinned thyself, and hast repented, and hast had thy pardon sealed in the sacrament; but thy pardon was clogged with an *ita quòd se bene gerat*, thou wast bound to the peace by that pardon, and hast broken that peace since, in a relapse, and so fallest under execution for thine old sins: God cuts off men by unsearchable ways and means; and therefore fear this Father as a sovereign, as a magistrate, for that use this word in St. John may have.

In Malachi we consider him in his supreme spiritual power, and in St. John in his supreme temporal power; and in this text, this Father is presented in a power, which includes both, in a judiciary power, as a judge, as our judge, our judge at the last day, beyond all appeal; and (as this apostle St. Peter, is said by Clement, who is said to have been his successor at Rome, to have said) *Quis peccare poterit*, &c. Who could commit any sin at any time, if at all times he had his eye fixed upon this last judgment? We have seen purses cut at the sessions, and at exe-

[36] John viii. 42. [37] John xix. 11. [38] Rom. xiii. 1.

cutions, but the cut-purse did not see the Judge look upon him: we see men sin over those sins to-day, for which judgment was inflicted but yesterday, but surely they do not see then that the Judge sees them. *Thou treasurest up wrath*, says the apostle[39], *against the day of wrath, and revelation of the judgment of God:* there is no revelation of the day of judgment, no sense of any such day, till the very day itself overtake him, and swallow him. Represent God to thyself as such a judge, as St. Chrysostom says, That whosoever considers him so, as that judge, and that day, as a day of irrevocable judgment, *Gehennæ pœnam tolerare malit, quàm adverso Deo stare*, He will even think it an ease to be thrown down into hell out of the presence of God, rather than to stand long in the presence, and stand under the indignation of that incensed Judge: the *ite maledicti* will be less than the *surgite qui dormitis*. And there is the miserable perplexity, *Latere impossibile, apparere intolerabile*[40], To be hid from this Judge is impossible, and to appear before him, intolerable: for he comes invested with those two flames of confusion, (which are our two next branches in the text) first, he respects no persons, then, he judges according to works: *without respect of persons*, &c.

Nine or ten several times it is repeated in the Scriptures, and, I think, no one entire proposition so often, *that God is no accepter of persons*. It is spoken by Moses, that they who are conversant in the law might see it, and spoken in the Chronicles, that they might see it who are conversant in state affairs, and spoken in Job, that men in afflictions might not misimagine a partiality in God: it is spoken to the Gentiles, by the apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, severally; to the Romans, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Colossians: and spoken by the chief apostle, St. Peter, both in a private sermon in Cornelius's house, and now in this Catholic epistle written to all the world, that all the world, and all the inhabitants thereof might know, *that God is no accepter of persons:* and lest all this should not be all, it is spoken twice in the apocryphal books; and though we know not assuredly by whom, yet we know to whom, to all that exercise any judiciary power under God, it belongs to know, *that God is no accepter of persons*. In divers of those places, this also is added,

[39] Rom. ii. 5. [40] Bernard.

*nor receiver of rewards;* whether that be added as an equal thing, that it is as great a sin to accept persons, as to accept rewards, or as a concomitancy, they go together, he that will accept persons, will accept rewards, or as an identity, it is the same thing to accept persons, and to accept rewards, because the preferment which I look for from a person in place, is as much a reward, as money from a person rich in treasure; whether of these it be, I dispute not: clearly there is a bribery in my love to another, and in my fear of another there is a bribery too: there is a bribery in a poor man's tears, if that decline me from justice, as well as in the rich man's plate, and hangings, and coach, and horses.

Let no man therefore think to present his complexion to God for an excuse, and say, my choler with which my constitution abounded, and which I could not remedy, inclined me to wrath, and so to blood; my melancholy inclined me to sadness, and so to desperation, as though thy sins were medicinal sins, sins to vent humours. Let no man say, I am continent enough all the year, but the spring works upon me, and inflames my concupiscences, as though thy sins were seasonable and anniversary sins. Make not thy calling the occasion of thy sin, as though thy sin were a mystery, and an occupation; nor thy place, thy station, thy office the occasion of thy sin, as though thy sin were an heir-loom, or furniture, or fixed to the freehold of that place: for this one proposition, *God is no accepter of persons*, is so often repeated, that all circumstances of dispositions, and callings, and time, and place might be involved in it. *Nulla discretio personarum, sed morum*[41]; God discerns not, that is, distinguishes not persons, but actions, for, *he judgeth according to every man's works*, which is our next branch.

Now this judging according to works, excludes not the heart, nor the heart of the heart, the soul of the soul, faith. God requires the heart, *my son give me thy heart;* he will have it, but he will have it by gift; and those deeds of gift must be testified; and the testimony of the heart is in the hand, the testimony of faith is in works. If one give me a timber tree for my house, I know not whether the root be mine or no, whether I may stub it by that gift: but if he give me a fruit-tree for mine orchard, he

[41] Ambrose.

intends me the root too; for else I cannot transplant it, nor receive fruit by it: God judges according to *the work*, that is, root and fruit, faith and work; that is the work; and then he judges according unto *thy work;* the works of other men, the actions and the passions of the blessed martyrs, and saints in the primitive church, works of supererogation are not thy works. It were a strange pretence to health, that when thy physician had prescribed thee a bitter potion, and came for an account how it had wrought upon thee, thou shouldst say, my brother hath taken twice as much as you prescribed for me, but I took none, or if he ordained six ounces of blood to be taken from thee, to say, my grandfather bled twelve. God shall judge according to *the work*, that is, the nature of the work, and according to *thy work*, the propriety of the work: thee, who art a Protestant, he shall judge by thine own work, and not by St. Stephen's, or St. Peter's; and thee, who art a Papist, he shall judge by thine own work, and not by St. Campian's, or St. Garnet's, as meritorious as thou thinkest them. And therefore if God be thy Father, and in that title have sovereign power over thee, a power spiritual, as high priest of thy soul, that discerns thy sacrifices; a power civil, and draws the sword of justice against thee, when he will; a power judiciary, and judges without accepting persons, and without error in apprehending thy works, if he be a Father thus, fear him, for these are the reasons of fear, on his part, and then fear him, for this reason on thy part, that this time which thou art to stay here, first, is but a sojourning, it is no more, but yet it is a sojourning, it is no less, *pass the time of your sojourning here*, &c.

When there is a long time to the assizes, there may be some hope of taking off, or of smothering evidence, or working upon the judge, or preparing for a pardon: or if it were a great booty, a great possession which we had gotten, even that might buy out our peace. But this world is no such thing, neither for the extent that we have in it, it is but little that the greatest hath, nor for the time that we have in it; in both respects it is but a *sojourning*, it is but a *pilgrimage*, says Jacob[41], and *but the days of my pilgrimage;* every one of them quickly at an end, and all of them quickly reckoned. *Here we have no continuing city*[42]*;*

[41] Gen. xlvii. 6. [42] Heb. xiii. 14.

first, no city, no such large being, and then no continuing at all, it is but a sojourning. The word in the text is παροικίας, we have but a parish, we are but parishioners in this world, and they that labour to purchase whole shires, usurp more than their portion; and yet what is a great shire in a little map? Here we are but *viatores*, passengers, wayfaring men; this life is but the highway, and thou canst not build thy hopes here; nay, to be buried in the highway is no good mark; and therefore bury not thyself, thy labours, thy affections upon this world. What the prophet says to thy Saviour, (*O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man, that turns aside to tarry for a night*[44]?) say thou to thy soul, Since thou art a stranger in the land, a wayfaring man, turned aside to tarry for a night, since the night is past, *Arise and depart, for here is not thy rest*[45]; prepare for another place, and *fear* him whom thou callest *Father*, and who is shortly to be thy *Judge;* for here thou art no more than a *sojourner;* but yet remember withal that thou art so much, thou art a *sojourner*.

This life is not a parenthesis, a parenthesis that belongs not to the sense, a parenthesis that might be left out, as well as put in. More depends upon this life, than so: upon every minute of this life, depend millions of years in the next, and I shall be glorified eternally, or eternally lost, for my good or ill use of God's grace offered to me this hour. Therefore where the apostle says of this life, *Peregrinamur a Domino, We are absent from the Lord*[46], yet he says, *We are at home in the body:* this world is so much our home, as that he that is not at home now, he that hath not his conversation in heaven here, shall never get home. And therefore even in this text, our former translation calls it *dwelling;* that which we read now, *pass the time of your sojourning*, we did read then, *pass the time of your dwelling;* for this, where we are now, is the suburb of the great city, the porch of the triumphant church, and the grange, or country house of the same landlord, belonging to his heavenly palace, in the heavenly Jerusalem. Be it but a sojourning, yet thou must pay God something for thy

[44] Jer. xiv. 7. [45] Mic. ii. 10. [46] 2 Cor. v. 6.

sojourning, pay God his rent of praise and prayer; and be it but a sojourning, yet thou art bound to it for a time; though thou sigh with David, *Heu mihi, quia prolongatus incolatus*[47], Woe is me that I sojourn so long here, though the miseries of thy life make thy life seem long, yet thou must stay out that time, which he, who took thee in, appointed, and by no practice, no not so much as by a deliberate wish, or unconditioned prayer, seek to be delivered of it: because thy time here is such a sojourning as is quickly at an end, and yet such a sojourning as is never at an end, (for our endless state depends upon this) fear him, who shall so certainly, and so soon be a just judge of it; fear him, in abstaining from those sins which are directed upon his power; which are, principally, (as we intimated at the beginning, and with which we shall make an end) first, the negligence of his power upon thee, and then, the abuse of his power communicated to thee over others.

First then, the sin directed against the Father, whom we consider to be the root and centre of all power, is, when as some men have thought the soul of man to be nothing but a resultance of the temperament and constitution of the body of man, and no infusion from God, so they think that power, by which the world is governed, is but a resultance of the consent, and the tacit voice of the people, who are content for their ease to be so governed, and no particular ordinance of God: it is an undervaluing, a false conception, a mis-apprehension of those beams of power, which God from himself sheds upon those, whom himself calls gods in this world. We sin then against the Father, when we undervalue God in his priest. God hath made no step in that perverse way of the Roman church, to prefer, so as they do, the priest before the king; yet, speaking in two several places, of the dignity of his people, first, as Jews, then as Christians, he says in one place, They shall be *a kingdom*, and *a kingdom of priests*[48]; and he says in the other, They shall be *sacerdotium*, and *regale sacerdotium*, *priests*, and *royal priests*[49]: in one place, *the king*, in the other, *the priest* mentioned first, and in both places, both involved in one another: the blessings from both are so great, as that the Holy Ghost expresses them by one another mutually. When

[47] Psalm cxx. 5. [48] Isaiah xix. 6. [49] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

God commands his people to be numbered[50] in every tribe, one[51] moves this question, Why in all other tribes he numbered but from twenty years upward, and in the tribe of Levi from a month upward? *Agnosce sacerdos*, says he, *quanti te Deus tuus fecerit*, Take knowledge, thou art the priest of the high God, what a value God hath set upon thee, that whereas he takes other servants for other affairs, when they are men, fit to do him service, he took thee to the priesthood in thy cradle, in thine infancy. How much more then, when the priest is not *sacerdos infans*, a priest that cannot or does not speak; but continues watchful in meditating, and assiduous in uttering, powerfully, and yet modestly, the things that concern your salvation, ought you to abstain from violating the power of God the Father, in disesteeming his power thus planted in the priest?

So also do we sin against the Father, the root of power, in conceiving amiss of the power of the civil magistrate: whether where God is pleased to represent his unity, in one Person, in a King; or to express it in a plurality of Persons, in divers governors, when God says, *Per me reges regnant*, *By me kings reign;* there the *per*, is not a permission, but a commission, it is not, that they reign by my sufferance, but they reign by mine ordinance. A king is not a king, because he is a good king, nor leaves being a king, as soon as he leaves being good. All is well summed by the apostle, *You must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake*[52].

But then the greatest danger of sinning against the Father, in this notion of power, is, if you conceive not aright of his judiciary power, of that judgment, which he executes, not by priests, nor by kings upon earth, but by his own Son Christ Jesus in heaven. For, not to be astonished at the contemplation of that judgment, where there shall be information, examination, publication, hearing, judgment, and execution in a minute; where they that never believed, till they heard me, may be taken in, and I that preached and wrought their salvation, may be left out; where those wounds which my Saviour received upon earth, for me, shall be shut up against me, and those wounds which my blasphe-

[50] Numb. i. [51] Oleaster. [52] Rom. xiii. 5.

mies have made in his glorified body, shall bleed out indignation, upon sight of me, the murderer, not to think upon, not to tremble at this judgment, is the highest sin against the Father, and his power, in the undervaluing of it.

But there is a sin against this power too, in abusing that portion of that power, which God hath deposited in thee. Art thou a priest, and expectest the reverence due to that holy calling? Be holy in that calling. *Quomodo potest observari a populo, qui nihil habet secretum a populo*[53]? How can the people reverence him, whom they see to be but just one of them? *Quid in te miretur, si sua in te recognoscit?* If they find no more in thee, than in one another, what should they admire in thee? *Si quæ in se erubescit, in te, quem reverendum arbitratur, offendit?* If they discrn those infirmities in thee, which they are ashamed of in themselves, where is there any object, any subject, any exercise of their reverence? Art thou great in civil power? *Quid gloriaris in malo, quia potens es? Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man*[54]? Hast thou a great body therefore, because thou shouldest stand heavy upon thine own feet, and make them ache? Or a great power therefore, because thou shouldest oppress them that are under thee? use thy power justly, and call it the voice of allegiance when the people say to thee, as to Joshua, *All that thou commandest us, we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go*[55]: abuse that power to oppression, and thou canst not call that the voice of sedition, in which, Peter and the other apostles joined together, *We ought to obey God rather than man*[56]. Hast thou any judicial place in this world? here there belongs more fear than in the rest: some things God hath done in Christ as a Priest in this world, some things as a King, but when Christ should have been a judge in civil causes, he declined that, he would not divide the inheritance, and in criminal causes he did so too, he would not condemn the adulteress. So that for thy example in judgment, thou art referred to that which is not come yet, to that, to which thou must come, the last, the everlasting judgment. Weigh thine affections there, and then, and think there stands before thee now, a prisoner so affected, as thou shalt

[53] Ambr. Ep. 6. ad Iren.
[54] Psalm lii. 1.
[55] Jos. i. 17.
[56] Acts v. 29.

be then. Weigh the mercy of thy Judge then, and think there is such mercy required in thy judgment now. Be but able to say, God be such to me at the last day, as I am to his people this day, and for that day's justice in thy public calling, God may be pleased to cover many sins of infirmity. And so you have all that we intended in this exercise to present unto you, the first Person of the Trinity, God the Father, in his attribute of power, Almighty, and those sins, which, as far as this text leads us, are directed upon him in that notion of *Father*. The next day the Son will rise.

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## SERMON XXXVIII.

### *PREACHED UPON TRINITY SUNDAY.*

1 CORINTHIANS xvi. 22.

**If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.**

CHRIST is not defined, not designed by any name, by any word so often, as by that very word, *the Word*, *sermo*, speech. In man there are three kinds of speech; *sermo innatus*, that inward speech, which the thought of man reflecting upon itself, produces within, he thinks something; and then *sermo illatus*, a speech of inference, that speech which is occasioned in him by outward things, from which he draws conclusions, and determines; and lastly, *sermo prolatus*, that speech by which he manifests himself to other men. We consider also three kinds of speech in God; and Christ is all three. There is *sermo innatus*, his eternal, his natural word, which God produced out of himself, which is the generation of the second Person in the Trinity; and then there is *sermo illatus*, his word occasioned by the fall of Adam, which is his decree of sending Christ, as a Redeemer; and there is also *sermo prolatus*, his speech of manifestation and application of Christ, which are his Scriptures. The first word is Christ, the second, the decree, is for Christ, the third, the Scripture, is of Christ. Let the word be Christ, so he is God; let the word be

for Christ, for his coming hither, so he is man; let the word be of Christ, so the Scriptures make this God and man ours. Now *if* in all these, if any of these apprehensions, *any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.*

By most of those, who, from the perverseness of heretics, have taken occasion to prove the deity of Christ, this text hath been cited; and therefore I take it now, when in my course proposed, I am to speak of the second Person in the Trinity; but, (as I said of the first Person in the Trinity, the Father) not as in the school but in the church, not in a chair, but in a pulpit, not to a congregation that required proof, in a thing doubted, but edification, upon a foundation received; not as though any of us would dispute, whether Jesus Christ were the Lord, but that all of us would join in that excommunication, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be*, &c. Let this then be the frame that this exercise shall stand upon. We have three parts; the Person upon whom our religious worship is to be directed, *the Lord Jesus Christ:* and secondly, we have the expression and the limitation of that worship, as far as it is expressed here, *Love the Lord Jesus Christ:* and lastly, we have the imprecation upon them that do not, If any man do not, let him be *anathema, maranatha.* In the first we have *verbum naturale, verbum innatum*, as he is the essential word, *the Lord*, a name proper only to God; and then *verbum conceptum, verbum illatum*, God's decree upon consideration of man's misery, that Christ should be a Redeemer, for to that intent he is *Christus*, anointed to that purpose; and lastly, *Verbum prolatum, verbum manifestatum*, that this *Christ* becomes *Jesus*, that this decree is executed, that this Person thus anointed for this office, is become an actual Saviour; so the *Lord* is made *Christ*, and *Christ* is made *Jesus.* In the second part we shall find another argument for his Deity, for there is such a *love* required towards the *Lord Jesus Christ*, as appertains to God only; and lastly, we shall have the indeterminable and indispensable excommunication of them, who though they pretend to *love the Lord*, (God in an universal notion) yet do not *love the Jesus Christ*, God, in this apprehension of a Saviour; and, *If any man love not*, &c.

First then, in the first branch of the first part, in the name of

our Saviour, *the Lord*, we apprehend the eternal Word of God, the Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity: for, he is *Persona producta*, begotten by another, and therefore cannot be the first; and he is *Persona spirans*, a Person out of whom, with the Father, another Person, that is, the Holy Ghost proceeds, and therefore cannot be the last Person, and there are but three, and so he necessarily the second. Shall we hope to comprehend this by reason? *Quid magni haberet Dei generatio, si angustiis intellectus tui comprehenderetur*[1]? How small a thing were this mystery of heaven, if it could be shut in, in so narrow a piece of the earth, as thy heart? *Qui tuam ipsius generationem vel in totum nescis, vel dicere sit pudor*[2], Thou that knowest nothing of thine own begetting, or art ashamed to speak that little that thou dost know of it, wilt thou not be ashamed to offer to express the eternal generation of the Son of God? It is true, *de modo*, how it was done, our reason cannot, but *de facto*, that it was done, our reason may be satisfied. We believe nothing with a moral faith, till something have wrought upon our reason, and vanquished that, and made it assent and subscribe. Our divine faith requires evidence too, and hath it abundantly; for the works of God are as not so good evidence to my reason, as the word of God is to my faith; the sun shining is not so good a proof that it is day, as the word of God, the Scripture is, that that which is commanded there, is a duty. The root of our belief that Christ is God, is in the Scriptures, but we consider it spread into three branches, 1, The evident word itself, that Christ is God; 2, The real declaration thereof in his manifold miracles; 3, The conclusions that arise to our understanding, thus illumined by the Scriptures, thus established by his miracles.

In every mouth, in every pen of the Scriptures, that delivers any truth, the Holy Ghost speaks, and therefore whatsoever is said by any there, is the testimony of the Holy Ghost, for the Deity of Christ. And from the Father we have this testimony, that he is his Son, *This is my beloved Son*[3], and this testimony that his Son is God, *Unto his Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*[4]. The Holy Ghost testifies, and his Father,

[1] Nazianzen.
[2] Nazianzen.
[3] Matt. iii. ult.
[4] Heb. i. 8.

and himself; and his testimony is true, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*[5]. He testifies with his Father; and then, their angels and his apostles testify with him, *I Jesus have sent mine angels, to testify unto you these things in the church, That I am the root, and the offspring of David*[6], not the offspring only, but the root too, and therefore was before David. God and his angels in heaven testify it, and visible angels upon earth, his apostles, *God hath purchased his church, with his own blood*[7], says St. Paul; he who shed his blood for his church, was God; and no false God, no mortal God, as the gods of the nations were, but, *This is the true God, and eternal life*[8]; and then, no small God, no particular God, as the gods of the nations were too, but, *We look for the glorious appearing of our great God, our Saviour Christ Jesus*[9]: God, that is, God in all the persons, angels, that is, angels in all their acceptations, angels of heaven, angels of the church, angels excommunicate from both, the fallen angels, devils themselves, testify his Godhead, *Unclean spirits fell down before him, and cried, Thou art the Son of God*[10].

This is the testimony of his word; the testimony of his works, are his miracles. That his apostles did miracles in his name, was a testimony of his Deity. *His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong*[11], says St. Peter, at the raising of the cripple. But that he did miracles in his own name, by his own power, is a nearer testimony; *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*[12], says David, *Qui facit mirabilia solus, which doth his miracles alone*, without deriving any power from any other, or without using any other instrument for his power. For, *Mutare naturam, nisi qui Dominus naturæ est, non potest*[13]: Whosoever is able to change the course of nature, is the Lord of nature; and he that is so, made it; and he that made it, that created it, is God. Nay, it is more to change the course of nature, than to make it; for, in the creation, there was no reluctation of the creature, for there was no creature, but to divert nature out of

[5] Rev. i. 8. [6] Rev. xxii. 16. [7] Acts xx. 28. [8] 1 John v. 20.
[9] Tit. ii. 13. [10] Mark iii. 11. [11] Acts iii. 16.
[12] Psal. lxvii. 18. [13] Epiphanius.

her settled course, is a conquest upon a resisting adversary, and powerful in a prescription. The *Recedat mare*, *Let the sea go back*, and the *Sistat sol*, *Let the sun stand still*, met with some kind of opposition in nature, but in the *Fiat mare*, and *fiat sol*, *Let there be a sea, and a sun*, God met with no opposition, no nature, he met with nothing. And therefore, *Interrogemus miracula, quid nobis de Christo loquantur*[14], Let us ask his miracles, and they will make us understand Christ; *Habent enim si intelligantur, linguam suam*, If we understand them, that is, if we would understand them, they speak loud enough, and plain enough. In his miraculous birth of a virgin, in his miraculous disputation with doctors at twelve years of age, in his fasting, in his invisibility, in his walking upon the sea, in his re-assuming his body in the resurrection, Christ spoke, in himself, in the language of miracles. So also had they a loud and a plain voice in other men; in his miraculous curing the sick, raising the dead, dispossessing the devil, Christ spoke, in other men, in the language of miracles. And he did so also, as in himself, and in other men, so in other things; in the miraculous change of water into wine, in the drying up of the fig-tree, in feeding five thousand with five loaves, in shutting up the sun in darkness, and opening the graves of the dead to light, in bringing plenty of fish to the net, and in putting money into the mouth of a fish at the angle, Christ spoke in all these creatures, in the language of miracles. So the Scriptures testify of his Deity, and so do his miracles, and so do those conclusions which arise from thence, though we consider but that one, which is expressed in this part of the text, that he is *the Lord*, *If any love not the Lord*, &c.

We reason thus, God gives not his glory to others, and his glory is in his essential name, and in his attributes; and to whomsoever he gives them, because they cannot be given from God, he who hath them, is God. Of these, none is so peculiar to him, as the name of Jehovah; the name, which for reverence, the Jews forbore to sound, and in the room thereof ever sounded, *Adonai*, and *Adonai*, is *Dominus*, the name of this text, *The Lord;* Christ by being the Lord thus, is Jehovah, and if Jehovah, God. It is Tertullian's observation, *Et si Pater sit, et dicatur*

[14] Augustine.

*Dominus, et Filius sit, et dicatur Deus*, That though the Father be the Lord, and be called the Lord, and though the Son be God, and be called God, yet, says he, the manner of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, is, to call *the Father God*, and *the Son the Lord*. He is Lord with the Father, as he was con-creator, his colleague in the creation; but for that dominion and lordship which he hath by his purchase, by his passion, *Calcavit solus, He trod the wine-press alone*, not only no man, but no Person of the Trinity, redeemed us, by suffering for us, but he. For the ordinary appellation of *Lord* in the New Testament, which is κύριος, it is but a name of civility, not only no name implying Divine worship, but not implying any distinction of rank or degree amongst men. Mary Magdalen speaks of Christ, and speaks to the gardener, (as she thought) and both in one and the same word; it is κύριος, *Dominus*, *Lord*, to both: when she says, *They have taken away my Lord*[15], meaning Christ, and when she says to the gardener, *Sir, if thou hast borne him hence*, it is the same word too. But all that reaches not to the style of this text, *The Lord*, for here *the Lord*, is God; and *no man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*[16]. All that was written in the Scriptures, all that was established by miracles, all that is deduced by reason, conduces to this, determines in this, *That every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord;* in which essential name, the name of his nature, he is first proposed, as the object of our love.

Now this *Lord*, Lord for ever, is become that which he was not for ever, (otherwise than in a secondary consideration) that is, *Christ*, which implies a person prepared, and fitted, and anointed to a peculiar office in this world. And can the Lord, the ever-living Lord, the Son of God, the only Son of God, God himself have any preferment? Preferment by an office in this world? Was it a preferment to Dionysius, who was before in that height over men, to become a schoolmaster over boys; Were it a preferment to the king's son, to be made governor over a bee-hive, or overseer over an ant-hill? And men, nay mankind is no more, not that, not a bee-hive, not an ant-hill, compared to this Person, who being *the Lord*, would become *Christ*. As he

[15] John xx. 15, [16] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

was *the Lord*, we considered him as God, and that there is a God, natural reason can comprehend; as he is *Christ*, we consider him God and man, and such a Person, natural reason (not rooted in the Scriptures, not illustrated by the Scriptures) cannot comprehend; man will much easilier believe *the Lord*, that is, God, than *Christ*, that is, God and man in one person.

*Christ* then is the style, the title of his office; *Non nomen, sed appellatio*[17], *Christ* is not his name, but his addition. *Unctus significatur*, says he *et unctus non magis nomen, quam vestitus, calceatus; Christ* signifies but anointed, and anointed is no more a name, than apparelled, or shod, is a name: so, as he was apparelled in our flesh, and his apparel dyed red in his own blood, so as he was shod to tread the wine-press for us, so he was *Christ*. That it is *Nomen sacramenti*, as St. Augustine calls it, A mystery, is easily agreed to: for all the mysteries of all the religions in the world, are but milk in respect of this bone, but catechisms in respect of this school point, but alphabets in respect of this hard style, God and man in one Person. That it is *Nomen sacramenti*, as Augustine says, is easy; but that it is *Nuncupatio potestatis*, as Lactantius calls it, is somewhat strange, that it is an office of power, a title of honour: for the Creator to become a creature, and the Lord of life the object of death, nay the seat of death, in whom death did sojourn three days, can Lactantius call this a declaration of power? Is this *nuncupatio potestatis*, a title of honour? Beloved, he does, and he may; for it was so: for, it was an anointing; *Christus* is *unctus;* and unction was the consecration of priests, *Thou shalt take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head*[18]. The mitre (as you may see there) was upon his head then; but then there was a crown upon the mitre; there is a power above the priest, the regal power; not above the function of the priest, but above the person of the priest; but unction was the consecration of kings too; *Samuel saluted Saul with a kiss, and all the people shouted, and said, God save the king*[19]; but, *Is it not*, says Samuel, *because the Lord hath anointed thee, to be captain over his inheritance?* Kings were above priests; and in extraordinary cases, God raised prophets above kings; for there is

[17] Tertullian. [18] Exod. xxix. 7. [19] 1 Sam. x. 1 and 24.

no ordinary power above them: but unction was the consecration of these prophets too; Elisha was *anointed* to be *prophet* in Elias' room; and such a prophet as should have use of the sword: *Him that scapes the sword of Hazael*, (Hazael was king of Syria) *shall the sword of Jehu slay, and him that scapes the sword of Jehu* (Jehu was king of Israel) *shall the sword of Elisha slay*[20]. In all these, in priests who were above the people, in kings, who (in matter of government) were above the priests, in prophets, who (in those limited cases expressed by God, and for that time, wherein God gave them that extraordinary employment) were above kings, the unction imprinted their consecration, they were all *Christs*, and in them all, thereby, was that *nuncupatio potestatis*, which Lactantius mentions; unction, anointing was an addition and title of honour: much more in our *Christ*, who alone was all three; *A priest after the order of Melchizedek*[21]; *a king set upon the holy hill of Sion*[22]; and a *prophet, The Lord thy God will raise up a prophet, unto him shall ye hearken*[23]: and besides all this threefold unction, *Humanitas uncta divinitate;* he had all the unctions that all the other had, and this, which none other had; in him the humanity was consecrated, anointed with the divinity itself.

So then, *Unio unctio*[24], the hypostatical union of the Godhead to the human nature, in his conception, made him *Christ:* for, *Oleo lætitiæ perfusus in unione*[25], Then, in that union of the two natures, *did God anoint him with the oil of gladness above his fellows*[26]. There was an addition, something gained, something to be glad of; and, to him, as he was God, *the Lord*, so nothing could be added; if he were glad above his fellows, it was in that respect wherein he had fellows, and as God, as *the Lord*, he had none; so that still, as he was made man, he became this *Christ*. In which his being made man, if we should not consider the last and principal purpose, which was to redeem man, if we leave out his part, yet it were object enough for our wonder, and subject enough for our praise and thanksgiving, to consider the dignity, that the nature of man received in that union, wherein this *Lord* was thus made this *Christ*, for, the Godhead did not swallow up

[20] 1 Kings xix. 16, 17. [21] Psal. cx. 4. [22] Psal. ii. 6.
[23] Deut. xviii. [24] Nazianzen. [25] Cyrill. [26] Psal. xcv. 7.

the manhood; but man, that nature remained still; the greater kingdom did not swallow the less, but the less had that great addition, which it had not before, and retained the dignities and privileges which it had before too. *Christus est nomen personæ, non naturæ*[27], The name of *Christ* denotes one person, but not one nature: neither is Christ so composed of those two natures, as a man is composed of elements; for man is thereby made a third thing, and is not now any of those elements; you cannot call man's body fire or air, or earth or water, though all four be in his composition: but Christ is so made of God and man, as that he is man still, for all the glory of the Deity, and God still, for all the infirmity of the manhood: *Divinum miraculis lucet, humanum contumeliis afficitur*[28]: In this one Christ, both appear; the Godhead bursts out, as the sun out of a cloud, and shines forth gloriously in miracles, even the raising of the dead, and the human nature is submitted to contempt and to torment, even to the admitting of death in his own bosom; *sed tamen ipsius sunt tum miracula, tum supplicia*, but still, both he that raises the dead, and he that dies himself, is one Christ, his is the glory of the miracles, and the contempt and torment is his too. This is that mysterious Person, who is *singularis*, and yet not *individuus; singularis*, there never was, never shall be any such, but we cannot call him individual, as every other particular man is, because *Christitatis non est genus*, there is no genus nor species of Christs; it is not a name, which, so (as the name belongs to our Christ, that is, by being anointed with the Divine nature) can be communicated to any other, as the name of man, may to every individual man. Christ is not that *spectrum*, that Damascene speaks of, nor that *electrum* that Tertullian speaks of: not *spectrum*, so as that the two natures should but imaginarily be united, and only to amaze and astonish us, that we could not tell what to call it, what to make of it, a spectre, an apparition, a phantasma, for he was a real person. Neither was he Tertullian's *electrum*, a third metal made of two other metals, but a Person so made of God and man, as that, in that Person, God and man, are in their natures still distinguished. He is *Germen Davidis*[29], in one pro-

[27] Damascene. [28] Damascene, [29] Jer. xxiii. 5.

phet, the branch, the offspring of David; and he is *Germen Jehovæ*[30], the branch, the offspring of God, of the Lord, in another: when this *Germen Davidis*, the Son of man would do miracles, then he was *Germen Jehovæ*, he reflected to that stock into which the humanity was engrafted, to his Godhead; and when this *Germen Jehovæ*, the Son of God, would endure human miseries, he reflected to that stock, to that humanity, in which he had invested, and incorporated himself. This Person, this *Christ died for our sins*, says St. Paul[31]; but says he, he died *according to the Scriptures; non sine onere pronunciat Christum mortuum*[32]; the apostle thought it a hard, a heavy, an incredible thing to say that this Person, this Christ, this man and God, was dead, and therefore, *Ut duritiam molliret, et scandalum auditoris everteret*, That he might mollify the hardness of that saying, and defend the hearer from being scandalized with that saying, *adjecit, secundum Scripturas*, he adds this, Christ is dead, *according to the Scriptures:* if the Scriptures had not told us that Christ should die, and told us again, that Christ did die, it were hard to conceive, how this Person, in whom the Godhead dwelt bodily, should be submitted to death. But therein principally is he *Christus*, as he was capable of dying. As he was *Verbum naturale*, and *innatum*, The natural and essential word of God, he hath his first name in the text, he is *the Lord:* as he is *verbum illatum*, and *conceptum*, a Person upon whom there is a decree and a commission, that he shall be a Person capable to redeem man by death, he hath this second name in the text, he is *Christ;* as he is *the Lord*, he cannot die; as he is *Christ* (under the decree) he cannot choose but die; but as he is *Jesus*, he is dead already, and that is his other, his third, his last name in this text, *If any man love not*, &c.

We have inverted a little, the order of these names, or titles in the text; because the name of *Christ*, is in the order of nature, before the name of *Jesus*, as the commission is before the execution of the commission. And, in other places of Scripture, to let us see, how both the capacity of doing it, and the actual doing of it, belongs only to this Person, the Holy Ghost seems to con-

[30] Isaiah iv. 2. [31] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [32] Tertullian.

vey a spiritual delight to us, in turning and transposing the names every way; sometimes *Jesus* alone, and *Christ* alone, sometimes *Jesus Christ*, and sometimes *Christ Jesus*, that every way we might be sure of him. Now we consider him, as *Jesus*, a real, an actual Saviour. And this was his name; the angel said to his mother, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people;* and we say to you, Call upon this name *Jesus*, for he hath saved his people; for, *Now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*[33]: as he was *verbum conceptum*, and *illatum*, The word which the Trinity uttered amongst themselves, so he was decreed to come in that place, *The Lord of the vineyard* (that is, Almighty God, seeing the misery of man to be otherwise irremediable) *The Lord of the vineyard said, what shall I do? I will send my beloved Son; it may be, they will reverence him when they see him*[34]. But did they reverence him, when they saw him? This sending made him *Christ*, a Person, whom, though the Son of God, they might see: they did see him; but then, says that Gospel, *they drew him out and killed him.* And this he knew before he came, and yet came, and herein was *Jesus*, a real, an actual, a zealous Saviour, even of them that slew him: and in this (with piety and reverence) we may be bold to say, that even the Son of God, was *Filius prodigus*, that poured out his blood even for his enemies; but rather in that acclamation of the prodigal child's father, *This my son was dead, and is alive again, he was lost, and is found.* For, but for this desire of our salvation, why should he who was *the Lord*, be ambitious of that name, the name of *Jesus*, which was not *tam expectabile apud Judæos nomen*[35], no such name as was in any especial estimation amongst the Jews: for, we see in Josephus, divers men of that name, of no great honour, of no good conversation. But because the name implies salvation, Joshua, who had another name before, *Cum in hujus sacramenti imagine parabatur*[36], when he was prepared as a type of this *Jesus*, to be a Saviour, a deliverer of the people, *Etiam nominis Dominici inauguratus est figura, et Jesus cognominatus*, then he was canonized with that name of salvation, and called Joshua, which is Jesus.

[33] Rom. viii. 1. [34] Luke xx. 13. [35] Tertullian. [36] Tertullian.

The Lord then, the Son of God, had a *sitio*, a thirsting, in heaven, as well as upon the cross; he thirsted our salvation there; and in the midst of the fellowship of the Father from whom he came, and of the Holy Ghost, who came from him and the Father, and all the angels, who came (by a lower way) from them all, he desired the conversation of man, for man's sake; he that was God *the Lord*, became *Christ*, a man, and he that was *Christ*, became *Jesus*, no man, a dead man, to save man: to save man, all ways, in all his parts, and to save all men, in all parts of the world: to save his soul from hell, where we should have felt pains, and yet been dead, then when we felt them; and seen horrid spectacles, and yet been in darkness and blindness, then when we saw them; and suffered insufferable torments, and yet have told over innumerable ages in suffering them: to save this soul from that hell, and to fill that capacity which it hath, and give it a capacity which it hath not, to comprehend the joys and glory of heaven, this *Christ* became *Jesus*. To save this body from the condemnation of everlasting corruption, where the worms that we breed are our betters, because they have a life, where the dust of dead kings is blown into the street, and the dust of the street blown into the river, and the muddy river tumbled into the sea, and the sea remanded into all the veins and channels of the earth; to save this body from everlasting dissolution, dispersion, dissipation, and to make it in a glorious resurrection, not only a temple of the Holy Ghost, but a companion of the Holy Ghost in the kingdom of heaven, this *Christ* became this *Jesus*. To save this man, body and soul together, from the punishments due to his former sins, and to save him from falling into future sins by the assistance of his word preached, and his sacraments administered in the church, which he purchased by his blood, is this Person, the *Lord*, the *Christ*, become this *Jesus*, this Saviour. To save so, all ways, in soul, in body, in both; and also to save all men. For, to exclude others from that kingdom, is a tyranny, an usurpation; and to exclude thyself, is a sinful, and a rebellious melancholy. But as melancholy in the body is the hardest humour to be purged, so is the melancholy in the soul, the distrust of thy salvation too. Flashes of presumption a calamity will quench, but clouds of desperation

calamities thicken upon us; but even in this inordinate dejection thou exaltest thyself above God, and makest thy worst better than his best, thy sins larger than his mercy. Christ hath a Greek name, and an Hebrew name; *Christ* is Greek, *Jesus* is Hebrew; he had commission to save all nations, and he hath saved all; thou givest him another Hebrew name, and another Greek, when thou makest his name *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon*[37], a destroyer; when thou wilt not apprehend him as a Saviour, and love him so; which is our second part, in our order proposed at first, *If any man love not*, &c.

In the former part, we found it to be one argument for the Deity of Christ, that he was *Jehovah*, *The Lord;* we have another here, that this great branch, nay this very root of all Divine worship due to God, is required to be exhibited to this Person, that is, *Love*, *If any man love not*, &c. If any man could see virtue with his eye, he would be in love with her: Christ Jesus hath been seen so: *Quod vidimus*, says the apostle, *That which we have seen with our eyes, we preach to you*, and therefore *If any man love not*, &c. If he love him not with that love which implies a confession, that the Lord Jesus is God, that is, if he love him not with all his heart, and all his power: *What doth the Lord thy God require of thee? To love him with all thy heart, and all thy soul*[38]. God forbids us not a love of the creature, proportionable to the good that that creature can do us: to love fire as it warms me, and meat as it feeds me, and a wife as she helps me; but because God does all this, in all these several instruments, God alone is centrically, radically, directly to be loved, and the creature with a love reflected, and derived from him; and Christ to be loved with the love due to God himself: *He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me*[39], says Christ himself. If then we love him so, as we love God, entirely, we confess him to be the *Lord;* and if we love him so, as he hath loved us, we confess him to be *Christ Jesus:* and we consider his love to us (for the present) in these two demonstrations of it, first *Dilexit in finem*, as he *loved*, so he *loved to the end;* and then *Posuit animam*, *Greater love there is not, than to die for one*, and he did that.

[37] Rev. ix. 11. [38] Levit. x. 12. [39] Matt. x. 37.

Our Saviour Christ forsook not Peter, when Peter forsook him: because he loved him, he loved him to the end. Love thou Christ to the end; to his end, and to thy end. *Finem Domini vidistis*, says St. James, *You have seen the end of the Lord*[40]; that is, says Augustine, to what end the Lord came; his way was contempt and misery, and his end was shame and death: love him there. Thy love is not required only in the *hosannas* of Christ, when Christ is magnified, and his Gospel advanced, and men preferred for loving it: no, nor only in the *transfiguration* of Christ, when Christ appears to thee in some particular beams, and manifestation of his glory; but love him in his *crucifigatur*, than when it is a scornful thing to love him, and love him in the *nunquid et tu?* when thou must pass that examination, *Wert not thou one of them*[41]? And in the *nonne ego te vidi?* if witnesses come in against thee for the love of Christ, love him when it is a suspicious thing, a dangerous thing to love him; and love him not only in spiritual transfigurations, when he visits thy soul with glorious consolations, but even in his inward eclipses, when he withholds his comforts, and withdraws his cheerfulness, even when he makes as though he loved not thee, love him. Love him, all the way, to his end, and to thy end too, to the laying down of thy life for him.

Love him then in the laying down of the pleasures of this life for him, and love him in the laying down of the life itself, if his love need that testimony. Of the first case, of crucifying himself to the world, St. Augustine had occasion[42] to say much to a young gentleman, young, and noble, and rich, and (which is not, in such persons, an ordinary tentation, but where it is, it is a shrewd one) as he was young, and noble, and rich, so he was learned in other learnings, and upon that strength withdrew, and kept off from Christ. It was Licentius, to whom St. Augustine writes his thirty-ninth epistle. He had sent to St. Augustine a handsome elegy of his making, in which *poem* he had said as much of the vanity and deceivableness of this world, as St. Augustine could have looked for, or, perchance, have said in a homily; and he ends his elegy thus, *Hoc opus, ut jubeas*, All this

[40] James v. 11. [41] John xviii. 25, 26. [42] Epist. xxxix.

concerning this world I know already, do you but tell me, do you command me, what I shall do. *Jubebit Augustinus conservo suo?* says that sensible and blessed father: Shall I, shall Augustine command his fellow-servant? *Et non plangat potiùs frustra jubere Dominum?* Must not Augustine rather lament that the Lord hath commanded thee, and is not obeyed? Wouldst thou hear me? Canst thou pretend that? *Exaudi teipsum, durissime, immanissime, surdissime;* Thou that art inexorable against the persuasions of thine own soul, hard against the tenderness of thine own heart, deaf against the charms of thine own verses, canst thou pretend a willingness to be led by me? *Quam animam, quod ingenium non licet immolare Deo nostro?* How well disposed a soul, how high pitched a wit is taken out of my hands, that I may not sacrifice that soul, that I may not direct that wit upon our God, because, with all these good parts, thou turnest upon the pleasures of this world? *Mentiuntur, moriuntur, in mortem trahunt:* Do not speak out of wit, nor out of a love to elegant expressions, nor do not speak in jest of the dangerous vanities of this world; *mentiuntur*, they are false, they perform not their promises; *moriuntur*, they are transitory, they stay not with thee; and *in mortem trahunt*, they die, and they die of the infection, and they transfuse the venom into thee, and thou diest with them: *Non dicit verum, nisi veritas, et Christus veritas*, Nothing will deal truly with thee but the truth itself, and only Christ Jesus is this truth. He follows it thus much farther, *Si calicem aureum invenisses in terra*, If thou foundest a chalice of gold in the earth, so good a heart as thine would say, Surely this belongs to the church, and surely thou wouldst give it to the church: *Accepisti à Deo ingenium spiritualiter aureum*, God hath given thee a wit, an understanding, not of the gold of Ophir, but of the gold of the heavenly Jerusalem, *Et in illo, Satanæ propinas teipsum?* In that chalice once consecrated to God, wilt thou drink a health to the devil, and drink a health to him in thine own blood, in making thy wit, thy learning, thy good parts advance his kingdom? He ends all thus, *Miserearis jam mei, si tibi viluisti*, If thou undervalue thyself, if thou think not thyself worth hearing, if thou follow not thine own counsels, yet *miserearis mei*, have mercy upon me, me, whose charge it is to bring

others to heaven, me, who shall not be received there, if I bring nobody with me; be content to go with me, that way, which by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost I do show, and that way, which by the conduct of the Holy Ghost I would fain go. All bends to this, first, love Christ so far as to lay down the pleasures of this life for him, and so far, as to lay down the life itself for him.

Christ did so for thee: and his blessed servants the martyrs, in the primitive church, did so for him, and thee; for his glory, for thy example. Can there be any ill, any loss, in giving thy life for him? Is it not a part of the reward itself, the honour to suffer for him? When Christ says[43], *Whosoever loses anything for my sake, and the Gospels, he shall have a hundred fold in houses, and lands, with persecutions*, we need not limit that clause of the promise, (*with persecutions*) to be, that in the midst of persecutions, God will give us temporal blessings, but that in the midst of temporal blessings, God will give us persecutions; that it shall be a part of his mercy, to be delivered from the danger of being puffed up by those temporal abundances, by having a mixture of adversity and persecutions: and then, what ill, what loss, is there in laying down this life for him? *Quid hoc mali est, quod martyrialis mali, non habet timorem, pudorem, tergiversationem, pœnitentiam, deplorationem*[44]? What kind of evil is this, which when it came to the highest, *ad malum martyriale*, to martyrdom, to death, did neither imprint in our holy predecessors in the primitive church, *timorem*, any fear that it would come; nor *tergiversationem*, any recanting lest it should come; nor *pudorem*, any shame when it was come; nor *pœnitentiam*, any repentance that they would suffer it to come; nor *deplorationem*, any lamentation by their heirs, and executors, because they lost all, when it was come? *Quid mali?* What kind of evil can I call this, in laying down my life, for this Lord of life, *cujus reus gaudet*[45], when those martyrs called that guiltiness a joy, *cujus accusatio votum*, and the accusation a satisfaction, *cujus pœna fœlicitas*, and the suffering perfect happiness? Love thy neighbour as thyself, is the farthest of that commandment; but love God above thy-

[43] Mark x. 30. [44] Tertullian. [45] Tertullian.

self; for, indeed, in doing so thou dost but love thyself still: remember that thy soul is thyself; and as, if that be lost, nothing is gained, so if that be gained, nothing is lost, whatsoever become of this life.

Love him then, as he is presented to thee here; love the *Lord*, love *Christ*, love *Jesus*. If when thou lookest upon him as the *Lord*, thou findest frowns and wrinkles in his face, apprehensions of him, as of a judge, and occasions of fear, do not run away from him, in that apprehension; look upon him in that angle, in that line awhile, and that fear shall bring thee to love; and as he is *Lord*, thou shalt see him in the beauty and loveliness of his creatures, in the order and succession of causes, and effects, and in that harmony and music of the peace between him, and thy soul; as he is *the Lord*, thou wilt fear him, but no man fears God truly, but that that fear ends in love.

Love him as he is the *Lord*, that would have nothing perish, that he hath made; and love him as he is *Christ*, that hath made himself man too, that thou mightest not perish: love him as the *Lord* that could show mercy; and love him as *Christ*, who is that way of mercy, which the Lord hath chosen. Return again, and again to that mysterious person, *Christ;* and let me tell you, that though the fathers never forbore to call the blessed Virgin Mary, *Deiparam*, the Mother of God, yet in Damascene's time, they would not admit that name, *Christiparam*, that she was the Mother of Christ: not that there is any reason to deny her that name now; but because then, that great heretic, Nestorius, to avoid that name, in which the rest agreed, *Deiparam*, (for he thought not Christ to be God) invented a new name, *Christiparam:* though it be true in itself, that that blessed Virgin is *Christipara*, yet because it was the invention of an heretic, and a fundamental heretic, who though he thought Christ to be anointed by the Holy Ghost above his fellows, yet did not believe him to be God, Damascene, and his age, refused that addition to the blessed Virgin; so reverently were they affected, so jealously were they enamoured of that name, *Christ*, the name which implied his unction, his commission, the decree, by which he was made a person, able to redeem thy soul: and in that contemplation, say with Andrew, to his brother Peter, *Invenimus Messiam;*

*I have found the Messiah;* I could find no means of salvation in myself, nay, no such means to direct God upon, by my prayer, or by a wish, as he hath taken; but God himself hath found a way, a *Messiah;* his Son shall be made man; and *inveni Messiam*, I have found him, and found, that he, who by his incarnation, was made able to save me, (so he was *Christ*) by his actual passion, hath saved me, and so I love him as *Jesus*.

Christ loved Stephen all the way, for all the way Stephen was disposed to Christ's glory, but in the agony of death (death suffered for him) Christ expressed his love most, in opening the windows, the curtains of heaven itself, to see Stephen die, and to show himself to Stephen[46]. I love my Saviour as he is *the Lord*, he that studies my salvation; and as *Christ*, made a person able to work my salvation; but when I see him in the third notion, *Jesus*, accomplishing my salvation, by an actual death, I see those hands stretched out, that stretched out the heavens, and those feet racked, to which they that racked them are footstools; I hear him, from whom his nearest friends fled, pray for his enemies, and him, whom his Father forsook, not forsake his brethren; I see him that clothes this body with his creatures, or else it would wither, and clothes this soul with his righteousness, or else it would perish, hang naked upon the cross; and him that hath, him that is, *The Fountain of the water of life*, cry out, *He thirsts*, when that voice overtakes me, in my cross ways in the world, *Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger*[47]; when I conceit, when I contemplate my Saviour thus, I love the *Lord*, and there is a reverent adoration in that love, I love *Christ*, and there is a mysterious admiration in that love, but I love *Jesus*, and there is a tender compassion in that love, and I am content to suffer with him, and to suffer for him, rather than see any diminution of his glory, by my prevarication. And he that loves not thus, that loves not the Lord God, and God manifested in Christ, *anathema*, *maranatha*, which is our next, and our last part.

Whether this *anathema* be denounced by the apostle, by way

[46] Acts vii. 56. [47] Lament. i. 12,

of imprecation, that he wished it so, or pronounced by way of excommunication, that others should esteem them so, and avoid them, as such persons, is sometimes debated amongst us in our books. If the apostle say it by way of imprecation, if it sound so, you are to remember first, that many things are spoken by the prophets in the Scriptures, which sound as imprecations, as execrations, which are indeed but prophecies; they seem to be spoken in the spirit of anger, when they are in truth, but in the spirit of prophecy. So, in very many places of the Psalms, David seems to wish heavy calamities upon his and God's enemies, when it is but a declaration of those judgments of God, which he prophetically foresees to be imminent upon them: they seem imprecations, and are but prophecies; and such, we, who have not this spirit of prophecy, nor foresight of God's ways, may not venture upon. If they be truly imprecations, you are to remember also, that the prophets and apostles had in them a power extraordinary, and in execution of that power, might do that, which every private man may not do: so the prophets rebuked, so they punished kings. So [a]Elizeus called in the bears to devour the boys; and so [b]Elias called down fire to devour the captains; so St. Peter killed [c]Ananias, and Sapphira with his word; and [d]so St. Paul struck Elymas the sorcerer with blindness. But upon imprecations of this kind, we as private men, or as public persons, but limited by our commission, may not adventure neither. But take the prophets or the apostles in their highest authority, yet in an over-vehement zeal, they may have done some things sometimes not warrantable in themselves, many times many things, not to be imitated by us. In Moses's passionate vehemency, *Dele me, If thou wilt not forgive them, blot me out of thy book*[48], and in the apostle's inconsiderate zeal to his brethren, *Optabam anathema esse, I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ*[49]; in James's and John's impatience of their Master's being neglected by the Samaritans, when they drew from Christ that rebuke, *You know not of what spirit you are*[50]; in these, and such as these, there may be something, wherein

[a] 2 Kings ii. 24. [b] 2 Kings i. [c] Acts v. [d] Acts xiii. 8.

[48] Exod. xxxii. 32. [49] Rom. ix. 3. [50] Luke ix. 55.

even these men cannot be excused, but very much wherein we may not follow them, nor do as they did, nor say as they said. Since there is a possibility, a facility, a proclivity of erring herein, and so many conditions and circumstances required, to make an imprecation just and lawful, the best way is to forbear them, or to be very sparing in them.

But we rather take this in the text, to be an excommunication denounced by the apostle, than an imprecation: so Christ himself, *If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen, or a publican*[51]; that is, have no conversation with him. So says the apostle, speaking of an angel, *Anathema, If any man, if we ourselves, if an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed*[52]. Now the excommunication is in the *anathema*, and the aggravating thereof in the other words, *maranatha*. The word *anathema* had two significations; they are expressed thus, *Quod Deo dicatum, quod à Deo per vitium alienatum*[53]; That which for some excellency in it, was separated from the use of man, to the service of God, or that which for some great fault in it, was separated from God and man too. *Ab illo abstinebant tanquam Deo dicatum, ab hoc recedebant, tanquam à Deo abalienatum*[54]: From the first kind, men abstained, because they were consecrated to God, and from the other, because they were alienated from God; and in that last sense, irreligious men, such as love not the Lord Jesus Christ, are *anathema*, alienated from God. Amongst the Druids, with the heathen, they excommunicated malefactors, and no man might relieve him in any necessity, no man might answer him in any action: and so amongst the Jews, the *Esseni*, who were in special estimation for sanctity, excommunicated irreligious persons, and the persons so excommunicated starved in the streets and fields. By the light of nature, by the light of grace, we should separate ourselves from irreligious, and from idolatrous persons; and that with that earnestness, which the apostle expresses in the last words, *maranatha*.

In the practice of the primitive church, by those canons, which

[51] Matt. xviii. 17. [52] Gal. i. 9. [53] Just. Mart. [54] Chrysostom.

we call the apostles' canons, and those which we call the penitential canons, we see there were different penances inflicted upon different parts, and there were, very early, relaxations of penances, indulgences; and there were reservations of cases; in some any priest, in some a bishop only might dispense. It is so in our church still; impugners of the supremacy are excommunicated, and not restored but by the archbishop; impugners of the Common Prayer Book excommunicated too, but may be restored by the bishop of the place: impugners of our religion declared in the articles, reserved to the archbishop: impugners of ceremonies restored when they repent, and no bishop named: authors of schism reserved to the archbishop; maintainers of schismatics, referred but to repentance; and so maintainers of conventicles, to the archbishop; maintainers of constitutions made in conventicles, to their repentance. There was ever, there is yet a reserving of certain cases, and a relaxation or aggravating of ecclesiastical censures, for their weight, and for their time: and, because *not to love the Lord Jesus Christ* was the greatest, the apostle inflicts this heaviest excommunication, *maranatha*.

The word seems to be a proverbial word amongst the Jews after their return, and vulgarly spoken by them, and so the apostle takes it, out of common use of speech: *maran*, is *Dominus, the Lord*, and *athan* is *venit, he comes:* not so truly, in the very exactness of Hebrew rules, and terminations, but so amongst them then, when their language was much depraved: but, in ancienter times, we have the word *mara* for *Dominus*[55], and the word *atha* for *venit*[56]; and so *anathema, maranatha* will be, *Let him that loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ, be as an accursed person to you, even till the Lord come.* St. Hierome seems to understand this, *Dominus venit*, That the Lord is come; come already, come in the flesh; *Superfluum*, says he, *odiis pertinacibus contendere adversus eum, qui jam venit;* It is superabundant perverseness, to resist Christ now; now that he hath appeared already, and established to himself a kingdom in this world. And so St. Chrysostom seems to take it too; Christ is come already, says he, *Et jam nulla potest esse excusatio non diligen-*

[55] Dan. iv. 16. [56] Deut. xxxiii. 2.

*tibus eum;* If any excuse could be pretended before, yet since Christ is come, none can be: *Si opertum*, says the apostle, *If our Gospel be hid now, it is hid from them who are lost;* that is, they are lost from whom it is hid. But that is not all, that is intended by the apostle, in this place. It is not only a censorious speech, it is a shame for them, and an inexcusable thing in them, if they do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, but it is a judiciary speech, thus much more, since they do not love the Lord, *the Lord judge them when he comes;* I, says the apostle, take away none of his mercy, when he comes, but I will have nothing to do with them, till he comes; to me, he shall be *anathema*, *maranatha*, separated from me, till then; then the Lord who shows mercy in minutes, do his will upon him. Our former translation had it thus, *Let him be had in execration*, and *excommunicated till death;* in death, Lord have mercy upon him; till death, I will not live with him.

To end all, if a man love not the Lord, if he love not God, which is, which was, and which is to come, what will please him? whom will he love? If he love the *Lord*, and love not *Christ*, and so love a god in general, but lay no hold upon a particular way of his salvation, *Sine Christo*, *sine Deo*, says the apostle to the Ephesians, when ye were *without Christ*, ye were *without God*[57]; a non-Christian, is an atheist in that sense of the apostle. If any man find a *Christ*, a Saviour of the world, but find not a *Jesus*, an actual Saviour, that this Jesus hath saved him, *Who is a liar*, says another apostle, *but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ*[58]? And (as he says after) *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*[59]. From the presumptuous atheist, that believes no God, from the reserved atheist, that believes no God manifested in Christ, from the melancholic atheist that believes no Jesus applied to him, from him of no religion, from him of no Christian religion, from him that errs fundamentally in the Christian religion, the apostle enjoins a separation, not till clouds of persecution come, and then join, not till beams of preferment come, and then join, not till laws may have been slumbered some years, and then join, not till the parties

[57] Eph. ii. 12. [58] 1 John ii. 22. [59] 1 John v. 1.

grow somewhat near an equality, and then join, but *maranatha, donec Dominus venit*, till the Lord come to his declaration in judgment, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. Amen.*

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## SERMON XXXIX.

### *PREACHED UPON TRINITY SUNDAY.*

PSALM ii. 12.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.

WHETHER we shall call it a repeating again in us, of that which God had done before to Israel, or call it a performing of that in us, which God promised by way of prophecy to Israel, that is certainly afforded to us by God, which is spoken by the prophet of Israel, *God doth draw us with the cords of a man, and with bands of love*[1]: *with the cords of a man*, the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and *with the bands of love*, the band and seal of love, a holy kiss, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.* No man comes to God, except the Father draw him; the Father draws no man, but by the Son; and the Son receives none, but by love, and this cement and glue, of a zealous and a reverential love, a holy kiss; *kiss the Son*, &c.

The parts upon which, for the enlightening of your understandings, and assistance of your memories, we shall insist, are two: first our duty, then our danger; the first is an expression of love, *kiss the Son;* the second is an impression of fear, *lest he be angry.* In the first we shall proceed thus: we shall consider first the object of this love, the Person, the second Person in the Trinity, *the Son;* the rather, because that consideration will clear the translation; for, in no one place of Scripture, do translations differ more, than in this text; and the Roman translation and ours differ so much, as that they have but *apprehendite disciplí-*

[1] Hosea xi. 4.

*nam, embrace knowledge*, where we have, (as you heard) *kiss the Son*. From the Person, *the Son*, we shall pass to the act, *Osculamini, Kiss the Son;* in which we shall see, that since this is an act, which licentious men have depraved, (carnal men do it, and treacherous men do it; *Judas*, and not only *Judas*, have *betrayed* by a *kiss*) and yet God commands this, and expresses love in this, everything that hath, or may be abused, must not therefore be abandoned; the turning of a thing out of the way, is not a taking of that thing away, but good things deflected to ill uses, by some, may be by others reduced to their first goodness. And then in a third branch of this first part, we shall consider, and magnify the goodness of God, that hath brought us into this distance, that we may *kiss the Son*, that the expressing of this love lies in our hands, and that, whereas the love of the church, in the Old Testament, even in the Canticle, went no farther but to the *Osculetur me, O that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth*[a]*!* now, in the Christian church, and in the visitation of a Christian soul, he hath invited us, enabled us to kiss him, for he is presentially amongst us: and this will lead us to conclude that first part, with an earnest persuasion, and exhortation *to kiss the Son*, with all those affections, which we shall there find to be expressed in the Scriptures, in that testimony of true love, *a holy kiss*. But then, lest that persuasion by love should not be effectual, and powerful enough to us, we shall descend from that duty, to the danger, from love, to fear, *lest he be angry;* and therein see first, that God, who is love, can be angry; and then, that this God who is angry here, is the Son of God, he that hath done so much for us, and therefore in justice may be angry; he that is our judge, and therefore in reason we are to fear his anger: and then, in a third branch, we shall see, how easily this anger departs, a kiss removes it, Do it, lest he be angry; and then lastly, we shall inquire, what does anger him; and there consider, that as we attribute power to the Father, and so, sins against power (the undervaluing of God's power in the magistrate over us, or the abusing of God's power, in ourselves, over others) were sins against the Father; so wisdom being the attribute of the Son, ignorance, which is so far under wisdom,

[a] Cant. i. 1.

and curiosity, which carries us beyond wisdom, will be sins against the Son.

Our first branch in our first part, directs us upon him, who is first and last, and yesterday and to-day, and the same for ever; the Son of God, *Osculamini Filium*, *Kiss the Son.* Where the translations differ as much, as in any one passage. The Chaldee paraphrase (which is, for the most part, good evidence) and the translation of the Septuagint, (which adds much weight) and the current of the fathers (which is of importance too) do all read this place, *Apprehendite disciplinam*, *Embrace knowledge*, and not *Osculamini Filium*, *Kiss the Son.* Of the later men in the Roman church, divers read it as we do, *osculamini*, and some farther, *Amplectimini*, *Embrace the Son.* Amongst the Jews, Rab. Solomon reads it, *Armamini disciplina*, *Arm yourselves with knowledge;* and another modern man, reads it, *Osculamini pactum*, *Kiss the covenant;* and, *Adorate frumentum*, *Adore the corn*, and thereby carries it from the pacification of Christ in heaven, to the adoration of the bread in the sacrament. Clearly, and without exception, even from Bellarmine himself, according to the original Hebrew, it ought to be read, as we read it, *kiss the Son.* Now very many, very learned, and very zealous men of our times, have been very vehement against that translation of the Roman church, though it be strengthened, by the Chaldee, by the Septuagint, and by the fathers, in this place. The reason of the vehemence in this place, is not because that sense, which that translation presents, may not be admitted; no, nor that it does not reach home, to that which is intended in ours, *kiss the Son:* for, since the doctrine of the Son of God, had been established in the verses before, to say now, *Apprehendite disciplinam*, Lay hold upon that doctrine; that doctrine which was delivered before, is, in effect the same thing, as, *kiss the Son.* So Luther, when he takes, and follows that translation of that church, says, *Nostra translatio, ad verbum, nihil est, ad sensum proprissima;* That translation, if we consider the very words only, is far from the original, but if we regard the sense, it is most proper. And so also Calvin admits; take it which way you will, *Idem manet sensus*, The sense is all one. And therefore another author[s] in

[s] Pellican.

the Reformation says, *In re dubia, malim vetustissimo interpreti credere*, Since upon the whole matter it is doubtful, or indifferent, I would not depart, says he, from that translation, which is most ancient.

The case then being thus, that that sense may be admitted, and admitted so as that it establish the same doctrine that ours does, why are our late men so very vehement against it? Truly, upon very just reason: for, when those former reverent men were so moderate as to admit that translation in this place, the church of Rome had not then put such a sanctity, such a reverence, such a singularity, and pre-eminence, and supremacy, such a *noli me tangere*, upon that translation; it had the estimation then of a very reverend translation, and compared with any other translations, then the best. But when in the Council of Trent they came to make it as authentical, to prefer it before the originals themselves, to decide all matters of controversy by it alone, and to make the doing so, matter of faith, and heresy, in anything to depart from that translation, then came these later men justly to charge it with those errors, wherein, by their own confessions, it hath departed from the original; not that these men meant to discredit that translation so, as that it should not still retain the estimation of a good and useful translation, but to avoid that danger, that it should be made matter of faith, to be bound to one translation; or that any translation should be preferred before the original. And so truly it is, in many other things, besides the translation. They say St. Peter was at Rome; and all moderate men went along with them; St. Peter was at Rome. But when upon St. Peter's personal being at Rome, they came to build their universal supremacy over all the church, and so to erect matter of faith upon matter of fact, then later men came to deny, that it could be proved out of Scripture, that Peter was at Rome; so the ancients spoke of many sacraments, so they did of purgatory, so they did of many things controverted now; when as they, then, never suspected that so impious a sense would have been put upon their words, nor those opinions and doctrines so mischievously advanced, as they have been since. If they would have let their translation have remained such a translation, we would not have declined it;

since they will have all trials made by it, we rather accept the original; and that is in this place, *Osculamini Filium, Kiss the Son.*

The person then (which was our first consideration) is the *Son;* the testimony of our love to this Person, is this *kiss, osculamini:* where we see, that God calls upon us, and enjoins unto us, such an outward act, as hath been diversely depraved, and vitiated before amongst men. God gives no countenance to that distempered humour, to that distorted rule; it hath been ill used, and therefore it may not be used. Sacred and secular stories abound with examples of the treacherous *kiss;* let the Scriptures be our limits. Joab's compliment with Amasa; *Art thou in health, my brother?* ended in this; *He took him with the right hand, as to kiss him, and killed him*[4]. Enlarge your thoughts a little upon Judas's case; Judas was of those, who had tasted of the word of God[5], and the powers of the world to come; he had lived in the conversation, in the pædagogy, in the discipline of Christ; yet he sold Christ; and sold him at a low price, as every man that is so unprovident, as to offer such a thing to sale, shall do; and he stayed not till they came to him, with, What will you take for your master? But he went to them, with, What will you give me for Christ? Yet Christ admits him, admits him to supper, and after all this, calls him *friend;* for, after all this, Christ had done two, perchance three offices of a friend to Judas; he washed his feet; and, perchance, he gave him the sacrament with the rest; and by assigning the sop for a particular mark, he let him see, that he knew he was a traitor, which might have been enough to have reclaimed him: it did not; but he proceeded in his treason, and in the most mischievous and treacherous performing of it, to betray him with a kiss; *He gave them a sign, whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he*[6]: *Dat signum osculi, cum veneno diaboli,* says Hierome, He kisses with a biting kiss, and conveys treason in a testimony of love. It is an apothegm of Luther's, *Mali tyranni, hæretici pejores, falsi fratres pessimi:* A persecutor is ill; but he that persuades me to anything, which might submit me to the persecutor's rage, is worse; but he that

[4] 2 Sam. xx. 9. [5] Heb. vi. 5. [6] Matt. xxvi. 48.

hath persuaded me, and then betrays me, is worst of all. When all that happens, when *a man's enemies are the men of his own house*[7], when *amongst ourselves men arise, and draw away the disciples*[8], remember that Judas defamed this kiss before, he kissed his master, and so betrayed him. *Homo sum, et inter homines vivo*, says St. Augustine, I am but a man myself, and I look but for men to live amongst; *Nec mihi arrogare audeo, meliorem domum meam, quam arca Noah*, I cannot hope to have my house clearer than Noah's ark, and there, in eight, there was one ill; nor than Jacob's house, and there the son went up to the father's bed; nor than David's, and there the brother forced the sister; nor than Christ's, and there Judas betrayed his Master, and with a kiss: which alone does so aggravate the fact, as that for the atrocity and heinousness thereof, three of the evangelists remember that circumstance, *That he betrayed him with a kiss;* and as though it might seem impossible, incredible to man, that it could be so, St. John pretermits that circumstance, that it was done with a kiss.

In Joab's treachery, in Judas's treason, is the kiss defamed, and in the carnal and licentious abuse of it, it is every day depraved. They mistake the matter much, that think all adultery is below the girdle: a man darts out an adultery with his eye, in a wanton look; and he wraps up adultery with his fingers, in a wanton letter; and he breathes in an adultery with his lips, in a wanton kiss. But though this act of love, be so defamed both ways, by treachery, by licentiousness, yet God chooses this metaphor, he bids us *kiss the Son*. It is a true, and an useful rule, that ill men have been types of Christ, and ill actions figures of good[9]: much more, may things not ill in themselves, though deflected and detorted to ill, be restored to good again; and therefore doth God, in more than this one place, expect our love in a kiss; for, if we be truly in love with him, it will be a holy and an acceptable metaphor unto us, else it will have a carnal and a fastidious taste. *Frustra ad legendum amoris carmen, qui non amat, accedit*[10]: He that comes to read Solomon's love-song, and loves not him upon whom that song is directed,

[7] Mic. vii. 6. [8] Acts xx. 30.
[9] Hieron. Ep. 131. G. Sanctius. 2 Sam. xi. n. 29. [10] Bernard.

will rather endanger, than profit himself by that reading: *Non capit ignitum eloquium frigidum pectus*[11]: A heart frozen and congealed with the love of this world, is not capable, not sensible of the fires of the Holy Ghost; *Græcè loquentes non intelligit, qui Græcè non novit, et lingua amoris ei, qui non amat, barbara;* As Greek itself is barbarous to him that understands not Greek, so is the language of love, and the kiss which the Holy Ghost speaks of here, to him that always grovelleth, and holds his face upon the earth.

Treachery often, but licentiousness more, hath depraved this seal of love; and yet, *Ut nos ad amplexus sacri amoris accendat, usque ad turpis amoris nostri verba se inclinat*[12]; God stoops even to the words of our foul and unchaste love, that thereby he might raise us to the heavenly love of himself, and his Son. *Cavendum, ne machina quæ ponitur ut levet, ipsa aggravet:* Take thou heed, that that ladder, or that engine which God hath given to raise thee, do not load thee, oppress thee, cast thee down: take heed lest those phrases of love and kisses which should raise thee to him, do not bury thee in the memory and contemplation of sinful love, and of licentious kisses. *Palea tegit frumentum; palea jumentorum, frumentum hominum:* There is corn under the chaff; and though the chaff and straw be for cattle, there is corn for men too: there is a heavenly love, under these ordinary phrases: the ordinary phrase belongs to ordinary men; the heavenly love and the spiritual kiss, to them who affect an union to God, and him whom he sent, his Son Christ Jesus. St. Paul abhors not good and appliable sentences, because some secular poets had said them before; nor hath the Christian church abhorred the temples of the Gentiles, because they were profaned before with idolatrous sacrifices. I do not conceive how that Jesuit Serarius[13] should conceive any such great joy, as he says he did, when he came to a church-porch, and saw an old statue of Jupiter, and another of Hercules, holding two basins of holy water; when Jupiter and Hercules were made to do Christians such services, the Jesuit is overjoyed. His Jupiter and his Hercules might well enough have been spared in the Christian church, but why some such

[11] Bernard. [12] Gregory. [13] In Jos. 6. q. 40.

things as have been abused in the Roman church, may not be preserved in, or reduced to their right use here, I conceive not; as well as (in a proportion) this outward testimony of inward love, though defamed by treachery, though depraved by licentiousness, is exacted at our hands by God himself, towards his Son, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.*

For all Joab's and Judas's treason, and carnal lover's licentiousness, kiss thou the Son, and be glad that the Son hath brought thee, in the Christian church, within that distance, as that thou mayest kiss him. The nearest that the synagogue, or that the spouse of Christ not yet married came to, was, *Osculetur me, Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.* It was but a kissing of his hand, when he reached them out their spiritual food by others; it was a marriage, but a marriage by proxy; the personal marriage, the consummation of the marriage was in the coming of Christ, in establishing a real presence of himself in the church. *Præcepta Dei oscula sunt*, says Gregory; In every thing that God says to us, he kisses us; *Sed per prophetas et ministros, alieno ore nos osculatur*, He kissed us by another man's mouth, when he spoke by the mouth of the prophets; but now that he speaks by his own Son, it is by himself. Even his servant Moses himself was *of uncircumcised lips*[14], and with the uncircumcised there was no marriage. Even his servant Esay was *of unclean lips*[15], and with the unclean there was no marriage: even his servant Jeremiah was *oris infantilis*[16], he was *a child and could not speak*, and with children, in infancy, there is no marriage: but in Christ, God hath abundantly performed that supply promised to Moses, there, *Aaron thy brother, shall be thy prophet;* Christ himself shall come and speak to thee, and return and speak for thee: in Christ, the *Seraphim* hath brought that *live coal* from the *altar*, and *touched Esay's lips*, and so spoken lively, and clearly to our souls; in Christ, God hath done that which he said to Jeremiah, *Fear not, I am with thee;* for in this *Immanuel*, God and man, Christ Jesus, God is with us.

In Eschines' mouth, when he repeated them, they say, even Demosthenes' orations were flat, and tasteless things; compare

[14] Exod. vi. 12. [15] Isaiah vi. 5. [16] Jer. i. 6.

the prophets with the Son, and even the promises of God, in them, are faint and dilute things. Elisha's staff in the hand of Gehazi his servant, would not recover the Shunamite's dead child[17]; but when Elisha himself came, and put his mouth upon the child's mouth, that did: in the mouth of Christ's former servants there was a preparation, but effect, and consummation in his own mouth. In the Old Testament, at first, God kissed man, and so breathed the breath of life, and made him a man; in the New Testament Christ kissed man, he breathed the breath of everlasting life, the Holy Ghost, into his apostles, and so made the man a blessed man. *Love is as strong as death*[18]; as in death there is a transmigration of the soul, so in this spiritual love, and this expressing of it, by this kiss, there is a transfusion of the soul too: and as we find in Gellius a poem of Plato's, where he says, he knew one so extremely passionate, *Ut parum affuit quin moreretur in osculo*, much more is it true in this heavenly union, expressed in this kiss, as St. Ambrose delivers it, *Per osculum adhæret anima Deo, et transfunditur spiritus osculantis*, In this kiss, where *Righteousness and peace have kissed each other*[19], In this Person, where the Divine and the human nature have kissed each other, in this Christian church, where grace and sacraments, visible and invisible means of salvation, have kissed each other, *Love is as strong as death;* my soul is united to my Saviour, now in my life, as in death, and I am already made *one spirit with him:* and whatsoever death can do, this kiss, this union can do, that is, give me a present, an immediate possession of the kingdom of heaven: and as the most mountainous parts of this kingdom are as well within the kingdom as a garden, so in the midst of the calamities and incommodities of this life, I am still in the kingdom of heaven. In the Old Testament, it was but a contract, but *per verba de futuro, sponsabo, I will marry thee*[20]; but now that Christ is come, the *bridegroom* is with us for ever, and the *children of the bride-chamber* cannot *mourn*[21].

Now, by this, we are slid into our fourth and last branch of our first part, the persuasion to come to this holy kiss, though

[17] 2 Kings iv. 34. [18] Cant. viii. 6. [19] Psal. LXXV. 10.
[20] Hos. ii. 19. [21] Matt. ix. 15.

defamed by treachery, though depraved by licentiousness, since God invites us to it, by so many good uses thereof in his word. It is an imputation laid upon Nero, That *Neque adveniens, neque proficiscens*, That whether coming or going he never kissed any: and Christ himself imputes it to Simon, as a neglect of him, that when he *came into his house*, he did not *kiss* him[22]. This then was in use, first among kinsfolks; *In illa simplicitate antiquorum, propinqui propinquos osculabantur*[23]: In those innocent and harmless times, persons near in blood did kiss one another: and in that right, and not only as a stranger, *Jacob kissed Rachel*[24], and told her how near of *kin* he was to her. There is no person so near of kin to thee, as Christ Jesus: Christ Jesus thy father as he created thee, and thy brother as he took thy nature: thy father as he provided an inheritance for thee, and thy brother as he divided this inheritance with thee, and as he died to give thee possession of that inheritance: he that is Nutritius, thy foster-father who hath nursed thee in his house, in the Christian church, and thy twin-brother, so like thee, as that his Father, and thine in him, shall not know you from one another, but mingle your conditions so, as that he shall find thy sins in him, and his righteousness in thee; *Osculamini Filium*, Kiss this Son as thy kinsman.

This kiss was also in use, as *Symbolum subjectionis*, A recognition of sovereignty or power; *Pharaoh says to Joseph, Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled*[25]; there the original is, *All my people shall kiss thy face.* This is the Lord paramount, the sovereign Lord of all, the Lord Jesus; *Jesus, at whose name every knee must bow, in heaven, in earth, and in hell*[26]; *Jesus, into whose hands all power in heaven and in earth is given*[27]; Jesus, who hath opened a way to our appeal, from all powers upon earth, *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul*[28]; Jesus, who is the *lion* and the *lamb* too, powerful upon others, accessible unto thee; *Osculamini Filium*, Kiss this Son, as he is thy sovereign.

It was in use likewise, *in discessu*, friends parting kissed; *Laban rose up early in the morning, and kissed his sons and his*

[22] Luke vii. 45. [23] Augustine. [24] Gen. xxix. 12.
[25] Gen. xli. 40. [26] Phil. ii. 10. [27] Matt. xxviii. 18. [28] Matt. x. 28.

*daughters, and departed*[29]; and *At Paul's departing, they fell on his neck, and wept, and kissed him*[30]. When thou departest to thy worldly businesses, to thy six days' labour, kiss him, take leave of him, and remember that all that while thou art gone upon his errand, and though thou work for thy family, and for thy posterity, yet thou workest in his vineyard, and dost his work.

They kissed too *in reditu; Esau ran to meet his brother, and fell on his neck and kissed him*[31]. When thou returnest to his house, after thy six days' labour, to celebrate his Sabbath, kiss him there, and be able to give him some good account, from Sabbath to Sabbath, from week to week, of thy stewardship, and thou wilt never be bankrupt.

They kissed in reconciliation; *David kissed Absalom*[32]. If thou have not discharged thy stewardship well, restore to man who is damnified therein, confess to God who hath suffered in that sin, reconcile thyself to him, and kiss him in the sacrament, in the seal of reconciliation.

They kissed in a religious reverence even of false gods; *I have, says God, seven thousand knees that have not bowed unto Baal, and mouths that have not kissed him*[33]. Let every one of us kiss the true God, in keeping his knees from bowing to a false, his lips from assenting, his hands from subscribing to an idolatrous worship. And, as they kissed *In symbolum concordiæ*, (which was another use thereof; *Salute one another with a holy kiss*[34]) upon which custom, Justin Martyr says, *Osculum ante eucharistiam*, Before the communion, the congregation kissed, to testify their unity in faith in him, to whom they were then sacramentally to be united, as well as spiritually, and Tertullian calls it *Osculum signaculum orationis*, because they ended their public prayers with that seal of unity and concord, let every congregation kiss him so; at every meeting to seal to him a new band, a new vow that they will never break, in departing from any part of his true worship. And to that purpose kiss his feet, as Mary Magdalen did[35]: *Speciosi pedes evangelizantium;* Let his feet, his ministers,

[29] Gen. xxxi. 15. [30] Acts xx. 37. [31] Gen. xxxiii. 4.
[32] 2 Sam. xiv. 33. [33] 2 Kings xix. 18. [34] Rom. xvi. 16.
[35] Luke vii. 38.

in whom he comes, be acceptable unto you; and love that, upon which himself stands, the ordinance which he hath established for your salvation.

*Kiss the Son*, that is, embrace him, depend upon him all these ways; as thy kinsman, as thy sovereign, at thy going, at thy coming; at thy reconciliation, in the truth of religion in thyself, in a peaceable unity with the church, in a reverent estimation of those men, and those means, whom he sends. Kiss him, and be not ashamed of kissing him; it is that, which the spouse desired, *I would kiss thee, and not be despised*[36]. If thou be despised for loving Christ in his Gospel, remember that when David was thought base, for dancing before the ark, his way was to be more base. If thou be thought frivolous for thrusting in at service, in the forenoon, be more frivolous, and come again in the afternoon: *Tanto major requies, quanto ab amore Jesu nulla requies*[37]: The more thou troublest thyself, or art troubled by others for Christ, the more peace thou hast in Christ.

We descend now to our second part, from the duty to the danger, from the expressing of love to the impression of fear, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry:* and first that anger and love, are not incompatible, that anger consists with love: God is immutable, and God is love, and yet God can be angry. God stops a little upon scorn, in the fourth verse of this Psalm, *When the kings of the earth take counsel against his anointed, he laughs them to scorn, he hath them in derision.* But it ends not in a jest; *He shall speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure;* and that is not all; *He shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

Lactantius reprehends justly two errors, and proposes a godly middle way in the doctrine of the anger of God. Some say, says he, that only favour, and gentleness can be attributed to God, *Quia illæsibilis*, He himself cannot be hurt, and then why should he be angry? And this is, says he, *Favorabilis et popularis oratio*, It is a popular and an acceptable proposition, God cannot be angry, do what you will, you cannot anger him, for he is all gentleness. Others, says Lactantius, take both anger, and gentleness from God, and say he is affected neither way: and this

[36] Cant. vii. 1. [37] Gregor.

is, says he well, *Constantior error*, An error that will better hold together, better consist in itself, and be better stood to; for they are inseparable things; whosoever does love the good, does hate the bad: and therefore if there be no anger, there is no love in God; but that cannot be said. And therefore, says he, we must not argue thus, because there is no anger in God, therefore there is no love; for that indeed would follow, if the first were true; but because there is love in God, therefore there is anger; and so he concludes thus, This is *cardo religionis*, this is the hinge upon which all religion, all the worship of God turns and moves, *Si nihil præstat colenti non debetur cultus, nec metus si non irascitur non colenti;* If God gave me nothing for my love, I should not love him, nor fear him, if he were not angry at my displeasing him. It is argument enough against the Epicures, (against whom principally he argues) *Si non curat, non habet potestatem:* If God take no care of human actions, he hath no power; for it is impossible to think, that he hath power, and uses it not; an idle God is as impossible an imagination, as an impotent God, or an ignorant God. Anger, as it is a passion that troubles, and disorders, and discomposes a man, so it is not in God, but anger as it is a sensible discerning of foes from friends, and of things that conduce, or disconduce to his glory, so it is in God. In a word, Hilary hath expressed it well, *Pœna patientis, ira decernentis*, Man's suffering is God's anger; when God inflicts such punishments, as a king justly incensed would do, then God is thus angry.

Now here, our case is heavier; it is not this great, and almighty, and majestical God, that may be angry; that is like enough; but even the *Son*, whom we must *kiss*, may be *angry:* it is not a person whom we consider merely as God, but as man; nay, not as man neither, but *a worm, and no man*, and he may be angry, and angry to our ruin. But is it he? Is it the Son, that is intended here? Ask the Roman translation, and it is not he: there it is, *Ne irascatur Dominus, Lest the Lord be angry;* but the record, the original will be against them: though it were so, *the Lord*, it might be *he, the Son*, but it is not *the Lord*, but must necessarily be *the Son;* the Son may, the Son will be angry with us. If he could be angry, why did he not show it to the devil that tempted him, to the Jews that crucified him? God bless us

from such an anger, as works upon the devil, in a desperate insensibleness of any mercy, from any trade in that sea, which environs the whole world, and makes all that, one island, where only the devil can be no merchant, the bottomless sea of his blood; and God bless us from such an anger, as works upon the Jews, in an obduration, and the punishment of it, a dispersion. Are ye sure David was not angry with Shimei, because he reprieved him for a time? Are ye sure the Son is not angry now, because ye perish not yet? Do you not say, A fruit is perished, if it be bruised in one place? Is not your religion perished, if locusts and ear-wigs have eaten into it, though they have not eaten it up? Is not your religion perished, if irreligion and profaneness be entered into your manners, into your lives, though religion have some motion in our ordinary meetings, and public exercises here?

The Son is *Caput*, and *Corpus*, as St. Augustine says often, Christ, and the church of Christ, are Christ; and, *Quis enumeret omnia, quibus corpus Christi irascitur?* says the same father; Who can reckon how many ways, this Christ, this body of Christ, the church, is constrained to express anger? How many excommunications, how many censures, how many suspensions, how many irregularities, how many penances, and commutations of penances, is the body of Christ, the church, forced to inflict upon sinners? And how heavy would these be to us, if we did not weigh them with the weights of flesh in the shambles, or of iron in the shop; if we did not consider them only in their temporal damage, how little an excommunication took from us of our goods, or worldly substance, and not how much it shut up the ordinary and outward means of our salvation. When the anger of the body, the church, is thus heavy, what is the anger of the head, of Christ himself, who is judge in his own cause? When an unjust judgment was executed upon him, how was the frame of nature shaked in eclipses, in earth-quakes, in renting of the temple, and cleaving the monuments of the dead: when his pleasure is to execute a just judgment upon a nation, upon a church, upon a man, in the infatuation of princes, in the recidivation of the clergy, in the consternation of particular consciences, *quis stabit?* who shall be able to stand in that judgment? *Kiss the Son lest he be angry;*

but when he is angry he will not kiss you, nor be kissed by you, but *throw you into unquenchable fire*, if you be *cold*, and if you be *luke-warm*, *spit you out of his mouth*, remove you from the benefit and comfort of his word.

This is the anger of God, that reaches to all the world; and the anger of the Son, that comes home to us; and all this is removed with this holy and spiritual kiss: *Osculamini Filium*, *Kiss the Son lest he be angry;* implies this, If ye kiss him, he will not be angry. What this kiss is, we have seen all the way; it is to hang at his lips, for the rule of our life, to depend upon his word for our religion, and to succour ourselves, by the promises of his Gospel, in all our calamities, and not to provoke him to farther judgments, by a perverse and froward use of those judgments which he hath laid upon us: as it is, in this point towards man, it is towards God too; *Nihil mansuetudine violentius*[38], There is not so violent a thing as gentleness, so forcible, so powerful upon man, or upon God. This is such a saying, as one would think he that said it, should be ready to retract, by the multiplicity of examples to the contrary every day. Such rules as this, He that puts up one wrong invites and calls for another, will shake Chrysostom's rule shrewdly, *Nihil mansuetudine violentius*, That no battery is so strong against an enemy, as gentleness. Say, if you will, *Nihil melius*, There is no better thing than gentleness, and we can make up that with a comment, that is, nothing better for some purposes; say, if you will, *Nihil frugalius*, There is not a thriftier thing than gentleness, it saves charges, to suffer, it is a more expensive thing to revenge than to suffer, whether we consider expense of soul, or body, or fortune; and, (by the way) that which we use to add in this account, opinion, reputation, that which we call honour, is none of the elements of which man is made; it may be the air, that the bird flies in, it may be the water that the fish swims in, but it is none of the elements that man is made of, for those are only soul, and body, and fortune. Say also, if you will, *Nihil accommodatius*, Nothing conforms us more to our great pattern Christ Jesus, than mildness, than gentleness, for that is our lesson from him, *Discite a me, quia mitis*, *Learn of me, for I am meek.*

[38] Chrysostom.

All this Chrysostom might say; but will he say, *Nihil violentius*, There is not so violent, so forcible a thing as mildness? that there is no such bullet, as a pillow, no such action, as passion, no such revenge, as suffering an injury? Yet, even this is true; nothing defeats an anger so much as patience; nothing reproaches a chiding so much as silence. *Reprehendis iratum? accusas indignationem?* says that father: Art thou sorry to see a man angry? *Cur magis irasci vis?* Why dost thou add thy anger to his? Why dost thou fuel his anger with thine? *Quod igni aqua, hoc iræ mansuetudo*, As water works upon fire, so would thy patience upon his anger. St. Ambrose hath expressed it well too, *Hæc sunt arma justi, ut cedendo vincat;* This is the war of the righteous man, to conquer by yielding. It was Hezekiah's way; when Rabshakeh reviled, they held their peace, (where the very phrase affords us this note, That *silence* is called *holding of our peace*, we continue our peace best by silence) *They held their peace*, says that text, *and answered him not a word, for the king had commanded them not to answer*[29]. Why? St. Hierome tells us why; *Ne ad majores blasphemias provocaret;* Lest the multiplying of choleric words amongst men, should have occasioned more blasphemies against God. And as it is thus with man, with God it is thus too; nothing spends his judgments, and his corrections so soon, as our patience, nothing kindles them, exasperates them so much, as our frowardness, and murmuring. *Kiss the Son*, and he will not be *angry;* if he be, kiss the rod, and he will be angry no longer; love him lest he be, fear him when he is angry: the preservative is easy, and so is the restorative too: the balsamum of this kiss is all; to suck spiritual milk out of the left breast, as well as out of the right, to find mercy in his judgments, reparation in his ruins, feasts in his lents, joy in his anger. But yet we have reserved it for our last consideration, what will make him angry: what sins are especially directed upon the second Person, the Son of God, and then we have done all.

Though those three attributes of God, power, and wisdom, and goodness, be all three in all the three Persons of the Trinity, (for they are all, as we say in the school, *co-omnipotentes*, they have all a joint-almightiness, a joint-wisdom, and a joint-goodness), yet

[29] Isaiah xxxvi. 21.

because the Father is *principium*, the root of all, independent, not proceeding from any other, as both the other Persons do, and power, and sovereignty best resembles that independency, therefore we attribute power to the Father: and because the Son proceeds *per modum intellectus*, (which is the phrase that passes through the fathers, and the school) that as our understanding proceeds from our reasonable soul, so the second Person, the Son, proceeds from the Father, therefore we attribute wisdom to the Son: and then, because the Holy Ghost is said to proceed *per modum voluntatis*, that as our soul (as the root) and our understanding, proceeding from that soul, produce our will, and the object of our will, is evermore *bonum*, that which is good in our apprehension, therefore we attribute to the Holy Ghost, goodness. And therefore David forms his prayer, in that manner, plurally, *Miserere mei Elohim*[40], Be merciful unto me all, because in his sin upon Uriah, (which he laments in that Psalm) he had transgressed against all the three Persons, in all their attributes, against the power, and the wisdom, and the goodness of God.

That then which we consider principally in the Son, is wisdom. And truly those very many things, which are spoken of wisdom, in the Proverbs of Solomon, do, for the most part, hold in Christ: Christ is, for the most part, the Wisdom of that book. And for that book which is called altogether, The Book of Wisdom, Isidore says, That a rabbi of the Jews told him, that that book was heretofore in the canonical Scripture, and so received by the Jews; till after Christ's crucifying, when they observed, what evident testimonies there were in that book for Christ, they removed it from the canon. This I know, is not true; but I remember it therefore, because all assists us, to consider wisdom in Christ, as that does also, that the greatest temple of the Christians in Constantinople, was dedicated in that name, Sophia, to wisdom; by implication to Christ. And in some apparitions, where the Son of God is said to have appeared, he calls himself by that name, *Sapientiam Dei*. He is Wisdom, therefore, because he reveals the will of the Father to us; and therefore is no man wise, but he that knows the Father in him. Isidore makes this difference *Inter sapientem, et prudentem*, that the first, The wise

[40] Psal. li.

man, attends the next world, the last, The prudent man, but this world: but wisdom, even heavenly wisdom, does not exclude that prudence, though the principal, or rather the ordinary object thereof, be this world. And therefore sins against the second Person, are sins against wisdom, in either extreme, either in affected and gross ignorance, or in over-refined and sublimed curiosity.

As we place this ignorance in practical things of this world, so it is stupidity; and as we place it in doctrinal things, of the next world, so ignorance is implicit belief: and curiosity, as we place it upon practical things, is craft, and upon doctrinal things, subtilty; and this stupidity, and this implicit faith, and then this craft, and this subtilty, are sins directed against the Son, who is true and only Wisdom.

First then, a stupid and negligent passage through this world, as though thou wert no part of it, without embarking thyself in any calling; to cross God's purpose so much as that, whereas he produced everything out of nothing, to be something, thou wilt go so far back, towards nothing again, as to be good for nothing, that when as our laws call a calling, an addition, thou wilt have no addition, and when (as St. Augustine says) *Musca soli præferenda, quia vivit*, A fly is a nobler creature than the sun, in this respect, because a fly hath life in itself, and the sun hath none, so any artificer is a better part of a state, than any retired or contemplative man that embraces no calling; these chippings of the world, these fragmentary and incoherent men, trespass against the Son, against the second Person, as he is Wisdom. And so do they in doctrinal things, that swallow any particular religion, upon an implicit faith. When Christ declared a very forward knowledge, in the temple, at twelve years of age, with the doctors, yet he was there, *audiens et interrogans*, he heard what they would say, and he moved questions, to hear what they could say[41]; for, *Ejusdem scientiæ est, scire quid interroges, quidve respondeas*[42], It is a testimony of as much knowledge to ask a pertinent question, as to give a pertinent answer. But never to have been able to give answer, never to have asked

[41] Luke ii. 46. [42] Origen.

question in matter of religion, this is such an implicitness, and indifferency, as transgresses against the Son of God, who is Wisdom.

It is so too, in the other extreme, curiosity; and this, in practical things, is craft, in doctrinal, subtilty. Craft, is properly and narrowly, to go towards good ends, by ill ways: and though this be not so ill, as when neither ends, nor ways be good, yet this is ill too. The civilians use to say of the canonists, and casuists, That they consider nothing but *crassam æquitatem*, fat equity, downright truths, things obvious and apprehensible by every natural man: and to do but so, to be but honest men, and no more, they think a diminution. To stay within the limits of a profession, within the limits of precedents, within the limits of time, is to over-active men contemptible; nothing is wisdom, till it be exalted to craft, and got above other men. And so it is, with some, with many, in doctrinal things too. To rest in positive divinity, and articles confessed by all churches, to be content with salvation at last, and raise no estimation, no emulation, no opinion of singularity by the way, only to edify an auditory, and not to amaze them, only to bring them to an assent, and to a practice, and not to an admiration, this is but home-spun divinity, but country-learning, but catechistical doctrine. Let me know (say these high-flying men) what God meant to do with man, before ever God meant to make man: I care not for that law that Moses hath written; that every man can read; that he might have received from God, in one day; let me know the cabal, that which passed between God and him, in all the rest of the forty days. I care not for God's revealed will, his acts of parliament, his public proclamations, let me know his cabinet counsels, his bosom, his pocket despatches. Is there not another kind of predestination, than that which is revealed in Scriptures, which seems to be only of those that believe in Christ? May not a man be saved, though he do not, and may not a man be damned, though he do perform those conditions, which seem to make sure his salvation in the Scriptures? Beloved, our countryman Holkot, upon the Book of Wisdom, says well of this wisdom, which we must seek in the Book of God: after he hath magnified it in his harmonious manner, (which was the style of that time)

after he had said, *Cujus authore nihil sublimius*, That the Author of the Scripture was the highest Author, for that was God, *Cujus tenore nihil solidius*, That the assurance of the Scripture was the safest foundation, for it was a rock, *Cujus valore nihil locupletius*, That the riches of the Scripture was the best treasure, for it defrayed us in the next world, After he had pursued his way of elegancy, and called it *Munimentum majestatis*, That majesty and sovereignty itself was established by the Scriptures, and *Fundamentum firmitatis*, That all true constancy was built upon that, and *Complementum potestatis*, That the exercise of all power, was to be directed by that, he reserves the force of all to the last, and contracts all to that, *Emolumentum proprietatis*, The profit which I have, in appropriating the power and the wisdom of the Scriptures to myself: all wisdom is nothing to me, if it be not mine: and I have title to nothing, that is not conveyed to me, by God, in his Scriptures; and in the wisdom manifested to me there, I rest. I look upon God's decrees, in the execution of those decrees, and I try whether I be within that decree of election, or no, by examining myself, whether the marks of the elect be upon me, or no, and so I appropriate the wisdom of the Scripture to myself. A stupid negligence in the practical things of this world, to do nothing; and an implicit credulity in doctrinal things, to believe all; and so also, a crafty preventing, and circumventing in the practical part; and a subtle, and perplexing intricacy, in the doctrinal part; the first on this side, the other beyond, do both transgress from that Wisdom of God, which is the Son, and, in such a respect, are sins, especially against the second Person in the Trinity.

# SERMON XL.

*PREACHED AT LINCOLN'S INN, UPON TRINITY SUNDAY*, 1620.

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GENESIS xviii. 25.

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

THESE words are the entrance into that prayer and expostulation, which Abraham made to and with God, in the behalf of Sodom, and the other cities. He that is, before Abraham was, Christ Jesus himself, in that prayer, which he hath proposed to us, hath laid such a foundation, as this is, such a religious insinuation into him, to whom we make that prayer; before we ask anything, we say, *Our Father, which art in heaven:* if he be our Father, a *father when his son asks bread, will not give him a stone*[1]; God hath a fatherly disposition towards us; and if he be our Father in heaven, *If evil fathers know how to give good things unto their children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Spirit to them that ask him?* Shall your Father, which is in heaven, deny you any good thing? says Christ there; It is impossible: *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* says Abraham here; it is as impossible.

The history which occasioned and induced these words, I know you know. The Holy Ghost by Moses hath expressed plainly, and your meditations have paraphrased to yourselves this history, that God appeared to Abraham, in the plain of Mamre, in the persons of three men; three men so glorious, as that Abraham gave them a great respect: that Abraham spoke to those three as to one person: that he exhibited all offices of humanity and hospitality unto them: that after they had executed the first part of their commission, which was to ratify, and to reduce to a more certainty of time, the promise of Isaac, and consequently of the Messiah, though Abraham and Sarah were past hope in one another; that they imparted to Abraham, upon their departure, the indignation that God had conceived against the sins of Sodom, and consequently the imminent destruction of that city;

[1] Luke xi. 12.

that this awakened Abraham's compassion, and put him into a zeal, and vehemence; for, all the while, he is said, *to have been with him that spoke to him*[1], and yet, now it is said, *Abraham drew near*[2], he came up close to God, and he says, Peradventure, (I am not sure of it) but peradventure, there may be some righteous in the city, and if there should be so, it should be absolutely unjust to destroy them; but, since it may be so, it is too soon to come to a present execution; *Absit a te*, says Abraham, *Be that far from thee;* and he repeats it twice; and upon the reason in our text, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

First then, the person who is *the Judge of all the earth*, submits us to a necessity of seeking, who it is that Abraham speaks to; and so, who they were that appeared to him: whether they were three men, or three angels, or two angels, and the third, to whom Abraham especially addressed himself, were Christ: or whether in these three persons, whatsoever they were, there were any intimation, any insinuation given, or any apprehension taken by Abraham, of the three blessed Persons of the glorious Trinity. And then, in the second part, in the expostulation itself, we shall see, first, the descent, and easiness of God, that he vouchsafes to admit an expostulation, an admonition from his servant, he is content that Abraham remember him of his office: and the expostulation lies in this, that he is a Judge, and *shall not a judge do right?* But more in this, that he is *Judge of all the earth*, and, if he do wrong, there is no appeal from him, and *shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* And from thence we shall fall upon this consideration, what was that *right*, which Abraham presses upon God here: and we shall find it twofold: for, first, he thinks it unjust, that God should wrap up just and unjust, righteous and unrighteous, all in one condemnation, in one destruction, *Absit, Be this far from God:* and then, he hath a farther aim than that, that God for the righteous' sake, should spare the unrighteous, and so forbear the whole city. And though this Judge of the whole earth, might have done right, though he had destroyed the most righteous persons amongst them, much more, though he had not spared the unrighteous, for the righteous' sake, yet we shall see at last, the abundant measure of God's overflowing

[1] Ver. 22. [2] Ver. 23.

mercy to have declared itself so far, as if there had been any righteous, he had spared the whole city. Our parts then are but two: but two such, as are high parts, and yet growing rich, and yet improving, so far, as that the first is above man, and the extent of his reason, the mystery of the Trinity; and the other is above God so, as that it is above all his works, the infiniteness of his mercy.

To come to the several branches of these two main parts, first, in the first, we ask, *An viri*, Whether these three that appeared to Abraham, were men or no. Now, between Abraham's apprehension, who saw this done, and ours, who know it was done, because we read it here in Moses's relation, there is a great difference. Moses who informs us now, what was done then, says expressly, *Apparuit Dominus*, *The Lord appeared*, and therefore we know they were more than ordinary men; but when Moses tells us how Abraham apprehended it, *Ecce tres viri*, *He lift up his eyes, and he saw three men*, he took them to be but men, and therefore exhibited to them all offices of humanity and courtesy: where we note also, that even by the saints of God, civil behaviour, and fair language is conveniently exercised: a man does not therefore mean ill, because he speaks well: a man must not therefore be suspected to perform nothing, because he promises much: such phrases of humility, and diminution, and undervaluing of himself, as David utters to Saul; such phrases of magnifying, and glorifying the prince, as Daniel uses to the king, perchance no secular story, perchance no modern court will afford; neither shall you find in those places, more of that which we call compliment, than in Abigail's access to David, in the behalf of her foolish husband[4], when she comes to intercede for him, and to deprecate his fault. Harshness, and morosity in behaviour, rusticity, and coarseness of language, are no arguments in themselves, of a plain, and a direct meaning, and of a simple heart. Abraham was an hundred years old, and that might, in the general, indispose him; and it was soon after his circumcision, which also might be a particular disabling; he was *sitting* still, and so not only enjoying his bodily ease, but his meditation, (for his eyes were cast down) but as soon as *he lift up his eyes*, and had occasion

[4] 1 Sam. xxv.

presented him to do a courtesy, for all his age, and infirmity, and possession of rest, he *runs* to them, and he *bows* himself to them, and *salutes* them, with words not only of courtesy, but of reverence: *Explorat itinera*, says St. Ambrose, He searches and inquires into their journey, that he might direct them, or accompany, or accommodate them; *Adest non quærentibus*, He prevents them, and offers before they ask; *Rapit prætergressuros*, When they pretended to go farther, he forced them, by the irresistible violence of courtesy, to stay with them, and he calls them, (or one amongst them) *Dominum*, *Lord*, and professes himself their *servant*. But Abraham did not determine his courtesy in words, and no more: we must not think, that because only man of all creatures can speak, that therefore the only duty of man is to speak; fair apparel makes some show in a wardrobe, but not half so good as when it is upon a body: fair language does ever well, but never so well as when it apparels a real courtesy: Abraham entreated them fair, and entertained them well: he spoke kindly, and kindly performed all offices of ease, and refocillation to these wayfaring strangers.

Now here is our copy, but who writes after this copy? Abraham is *pater multitudinis*, a father of large posterity, but he is dead without issue, or his race is failed; for, who hath this hospital care of relieving distressed persons now? Thou seest a needy person, and thou turnest away thine eye: but it is the prince of darkness that casts this mist upon thee; thou stoppest thy nose at his sores, but they are thine own incompassionate bowels that stink within thee; thou tellest him, he troubles thee, and thinkest thou hast chidden him into a silence; but he whispers still to God, and shall trouble thee worse at last, when he shall tell thee, in the mouth of Christ Jesus, *I was hungry and ye fed me not:* still thou sayest to the poor, I have not for you, when God knows, a great part of that which thou hast, thou hast for them, if thou wouldst execute God's commission, and dispense it accordingly, as God hath made thee his steward for the poor. Give really, and give gently; do kindly, and speak kindly too, for that is bread and honey.

Abraham then took these for men, and offered courtesies proper for men: for though he called him, to whom he spoke, *Dominum*,

*Lord*, yet it is not that name of the Lord, which implies his divinity, it is not Jehovah, but *Adonai;* it is the same name, and the same word, which his wife Sarah, after, gives him. And Mary Magdalen when she was at Christ's sepulchre[5], speaks of Christ, and speaks to the gardener (as she thought) in one and the same word: *Tulerunt Dominum*, she says of Christ, *They have taken away my Lord*, and to the gardener she says, *Domini, si sustulisti:* for κύριος, which is the word in both places, was but a name of civil courtesy, and is well enough translated by our men, in that latter place, *Sir, sir, if you have taken him away*, &c. Abraham then, at their first appearing, had no evidence that they were other than men; but we have; for that place of the apostle, *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*[6], hath evermore, by all expositors, had reference to this action of Abraham's; which proves both these first branches, that he knew it not, and that they were angels. The apostle's principal purpose there is, to recommend to us hospitality, but limited to such hospitality as might in likelihood, or in possibility, be an occasion of entertaining angels, that is, of angelical men, good and holy men. Hospitality is a virtue, more recommended by the writers in the primitive church, than any other virtue: but upon this reason, That the poor flock of Christ Jesus, being by persecution then scattered upon the face of the earth, men were necessarily to be excited, with much vehemence, to succour and relieve them, and to receive them into their houses, as they travelled.

Tertullian says well, That the whole church of God is one household: he says, every particular church is *Ecclesia apostolica, quia soboles apostolicarum*, An apostolical church, if it be an offspring of the apostolical churches: he does not say, *Quia soboles apostolicæ*, Because that church is the offspring of the apostolical church, as though there were but one such, which must be the mother of all: for, says he, *Omnes primæ, et omnes apostolicæ*, Every church is a supreme church, and every church is an apostolical church, *Dum omnes unam probant unitatem*, As long as they agree in the unity of that doctrine which the apostles taught, and adhere to the supreme head of the whole church, Christ

[5] John xx. [6] Heb. xiii. 2.

Jesus. Which St. Cyprian expresses more clearly, *Episcopatus unus est*, The whole church is but one bishopric, *Cujus, a singulis, in solidum pars tenetur*, Every bishop is bishop of the whole church, and no one more than another. The church then was, and should be, as one household; and in this household, says Tertullian there, there was first *Communicatio pacis*, A peaceable disposition, a charitable interpretation of one another's actions: and then there was *Appellatio fraternitatis*, says he; That if they did differ in some things, yet they esteemed themselves sons of one Father, of God, and by one mother, the Catholic church, and did not break the band of brotherhood, nor separate from one another for every difference in opinion; and lastly, says he, there was *Contesseratio hospitalitatis*, A warrant for their reception and entertainment in one another's houses, wheresoever they travelled. Now, because for the benefit and advantage of this ease, and accommodation in travelling, men counterfeited themselves to be Christians that were not, the Council of Nice made such provision as was possible; (though that also were deluded after) which was, that there should be *Literæ formatæ*, (as they called them) Certain testimonial letters, subscribed with four characters, denoting Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and those letters should be *contesseratio hospitalitatis*, a warrant for their entertainment wheresoever they came. Still there was a care of hospitality, but such, as angels, that is, angelical, good and religious men, and truly Christians, might be received.

Beloved, baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is this contesseration; all that are truly baptized are of this household, and should be relieved and received: but certainly there is a race that have not this contesseration, not these testimonial letters, not this outward baptism: amongst those herds of vagabonds, and incorrigible rogues, that fill porches, and barns in the country, a very great part of them was never baptized: people of a promiscuous generation, and of a mischievous education; ill brought into the world, and never brought into the church. No man receives an angel unawares, for receiving or harbouring any of these; neither have these any interest in the household of God, for they have not their first contesseration: and as there are *sins* which we are not bid *to pray for*, so there are beggars

which we are not bid to give to. God appeared by angels in the Old Testament, and he appears by angels in the New, in his messengers, in his ministers, in his servants: and that hospitality, and those feasts which cannot receive such angels, those ministers and messengers of God, where by reason of excess and drunkenness, by reason of scurril and licentious discourse, by reason of wanton and unchaste provocations, by reason of execrable and blasphemous oaths these angels of God cannot be present, but they must either offend the company by reprehension, or prevaricate and betray the cause of God by their silence, this is not Abraham's hospitality, whose commendation was, *that he received angels.*

Those angels came, and *stood before* Abraham, but till he *lift up his eyes*, and *ran forth to them*, they came not to him: the angels of the Gospel come within their distance, but if you will not receive them, they can break open no doors, nor save you against your will: the angel does, as he that sends him, *Stand at the door, and knock, if the door be opened, he comes in, and sups with him*[7]; What gets he by that? this; *He sups with me* too, says Christ there; he brings his dish with him; he feeds his host, more than his host him. This is true hospitality, and entertainment of angels, both when thou feedest Christ, in his poor members abroad, or when thou feedest thine own soul at home, with the company and conversation of true and religious Christians at thy table, for these are angels.

Abraham then, took these three for men, and no more, when as they were angels: but were they all angels, and no more? was not that one, to whom more particularly Abraham addressed himself, and called him Lord, the Son of God, Christ Jesus? This very many, very learned amongst the ancients, did not only ask by way of problem, and disputation, but affirm doctrinally, by way of resolution. Irenæus thought it, and expressed it so elegantly, as it is almost pity, if it be not true; *Inseminatus est ubique in Scripturis, Filius Dei*, says he: The Son of God is sowed in every furrow, in every place of the Scripture, you may see him grow up; and he gives an example out of this place, *Cum Abraham loquens, cum Abraham comesurus*, Christ talked

[7] Rev. iii. 20.

with Abraham, and he dined with him. And they will say, that whereas it is said in that place to the Hebrews, *That Abraham received angels*, the word *angel* must not be too precisely taken: for sometimes, *angel* in the Scriptures, signifies less than angel, (as John, and Malachi are called *angels*) and sometimes *angel* signifies more than angel, as Christ himself is called, *the Angel of the great council*[8], according to the Septuagint: so therefore they will say, That though Christ were there, Christ himself might be called so, *an Angel;* or it may be justly said by St. Paul, that *Abraham did receive angels*, because there were two, that were, without question, angels. This led Hilary to a direct, and a present resolution, that Abraham saw Christ, and to exclaim gratulatorily in his behalf, *Quanta fidei vis, ut in indiscreta assistentium specie, Christum internosceret!* What a perspicacy had Abraham's faith, who, where they were all alike, could discern one to be above them all!

Make this then the question, whether Christ ever appeared to men upon earth, before his incarnation; and the Scriptures not determining this question at all, if the fathers shall be called to judge it, it will still be a perplexed case, for they will be equal in number, and in weight. St. Augustine (who is one of them that deny it) says first, for the general, the greatest work of all, the promulgation of the law, was done by angels alone, without concurrence of the Son; and for this particular, says he, concerning Abraham, they who think that Christ appeared to Abraham, ground themselves but upon this reason, that Abraham speaks to all, in the singular number, as to one person; And then, says that father, they may also observe, that when this one Person, whom they conclude to be Christ, was departed from the other two, and that the other two went up to Sodom, there Lot speaks to those two, in the singular number, as to one person[9], as Abraham did before. From this argumentation of St. Augustine's, this may well be raised, that when the Scriptures may be interpreted, and God's actions well understood, by an ordinary way, it is never necessary, seldom safe to induce an extraordinary. It was then an ordinary, and familiar way for God, to proceed with those his servants by angels; but by his Son, so extraor-

[8] Isaiah ix. [9] Gen. xix. 18.

dinary, as that it is not clear, that ever it was done; and therefore it needs not be said, nor admitted in this place.

In this place, this falls properly to be noted, that even in these three glorious angels of God, there was an eminent difference; one of them seemed to Abraham, to be the principal man in the commission, and to that one, he addressed himself. Amongst the other angels, which are the ministers in God's church, one may have better abilities, better faculties than another, and it is no error, no weakness in a man to desire to confer with one rather than with another, or to hear one rather than another. But Abraham did not so apply himself to one of the three, that he neglected the other two: no man must be so cherished, so followed, as that any other be thereby either defrauded of their due maintenance, or disheartened for want of due encouragement. We have not the greatest use of the greatest stars; but we have more benefit of the moon, which is less than they, because she is nearer to us. It is not the depth, nor the wit, nor the eloquence of the preacher that pierces us, but his nearness; that he speaks to my conscience, as though he had been behind the hangings when I sinned, and as though he had read the book of the day of judgment already. Something Abraham saw in this angel above the rest, which drew him, which Moses does not express; something a man finds in one preacher above another, which he cannot express, and he may very lawfully make his spiritual benefit of that, so that that be no occasion of neglecting due respects to others.

This being then thus fixed, that Abraham received them as men, that they were in truth no other than angels, there remains, for the shutting up of this part, this consideration, whether after Abraham came to the knowledge that they were angels, he apprehended not an intimation of the three Persons of the Trinity, by these three angels. Whether God's appearing to Abraham (which Moses speaks of in the first verse) were manifested to him, when Sarah laughed in herself[10], and yet they knew that she laughed; or whether it were manifested, when they imparted their purpose, concerning Sodom[11]; (for in both these places, they are called neither men nor angels, but by that name, *the*

[10] Ver. 13. [11] Ver. 17.

*Lord*, and that Lord which is Jehovah) whether, I say, when Abraham discerned them to be such Angels, as God appeared in them, and spoke and wrought by them, whether then, as he discerned the divinity, he discerned the Trinity in them too, is the question. I know the explicit doctrine of the Trinity was not easy to be apprehended then; as it is not easy to be expressed now. It is a bold thing in servants, to inquire curiously into their master's pedigree, whether he be well descended, or well allied: it is a bold thing too, to inquire too curiously into the eternal generation of Christ Jesus, or the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost. When Gregory Nazianzen was pressed by one to assign a difference between those words, *begotten*, and *proceeding*, *Dic tu mihi*, says he, *quid sit generatio, et ego dicam tibi, quid sit processio, ut ambo insaniamus:* Do thou tell me, what this *begetting* is, and then I will tell thee, what this *proceeding* is; and all the world will find us both mad, for going about to express inexpressible things.

And as every manner of phrase in expressing, or every comparison, does not manifest the Trinity; so every place of Scripture, which the fathers, and later men have applied to that purpose, does not prove the Trinity. And therefore, those men in the church, who have cried down that way of proceeding, to go about to prove the Trinity, out of the first words of Genesis, *Creavit Dii*, That because God in the plural is there joined to a verb in the singular, therefore there is a Trinity in unity; or to prove the Trinity out of this place, that because God, who is but one, appeared to Abraham in three Persons, therefore there are three Persons in the Godhead; those men, I say, who have cried down such manner of arguments, have reason on their side, when these arguments are employed against the Jews, for, for the most part, the Jews have pertinent, and sufficient answers to those arguments. But yet, between them, who make this place, a distinct, and a literal, and a concluding argument, to prove the Trinity, and them who cry out against it, that it hath no relation to the Trinity, our church hath gone a middle, and a moderate way, when by appointing this Scripture for this day, when we celebrate the Trinity, it declares that to us, who have been baptized, and catechised in the name and faith of the Trinity, it is

a refreshing, it is a cherishing, it is an awakening of that former knowledge which we had of the Trinity, to hear that our only God thus manifested himself to Abraham in three Persons.

Luther says well upon this text, If there were no other proof of the Trinity but this, I should not believe the Trinity; but yet says he, This is *singulare testimonium de articulo Trinitatis*, Though it be not a concluding argument, yet it is a great testimony of the Trinity. *Fateor*, says he, *historico sensu nihil concludi præter hospitalitatem*, I confess, in the literal sense, there is nothing but a recommendation of hospitality, and therefore, to the Jews, I would urge no more out of this place: *Sed non sic agendum cum auditoribus, ac cum adversariis*, We must not proceed alike with friends and with enemies. There are places of Scriptures for direct proofs, and there are places to exercise our meditation, and devotion in things, for which we need not, nor ask not any new proof. And for exercise, says Luther, *Rudi ligno ad formam gladii utimur*, We content ourselves with a foil, or with a stick, and we require not a sharp sword. To cut off the enemies of the Trinity, we have two-edged swords, that is, undeniable arguments: but to exercise our own devotions, we are content with similitudinary, and comparative reasons. He pursues it farther, to good use: the story doth not teach us, that Sarah is the *Christian church*, and Hagar the *synagogue;* but St. Paul proves that, from that story[12]; he proves it from thence, though he call it but an *allegory*. It is true that St. Augustine says, *Figura nihil probat*, A figure, an allegory proves nothing; yet, says he, *Addit lucem, et ornat*, It makes that which is true in itself, more evident and more acceptable.

And therefore it is a lovely and a religious thing, to find out *vestigia Trinitatis*, impressions of the Trinity, in as many things as we can; and it is a reverent obedience to embrace the wisdom of our church, in renewing the Trinity to our contemplation, by the reading of this Scripture, this day, for, even out of this Scripture, Philo Judæus, (although he knew not the true Trinity aright) found a threefold manifestation of God to man, in this appearing of God to Abraham: for, as he is called in this story, Jehovah, he considers him, *Fontem essentiæ*, To be the fountain

[12] Gal. iv. 23.

of all being; as he is called *Deus*, God, he considers him, in the administration of his creatures, in his providence; as he is called *Dominus*, Lord, and King, he considers him in the judgment, glorifying, and rejecting according to their merits: so, though he found not a Trinity of Persons, he found a Trinity of actions in the Text, creation, providence, and judgment. If he, who knew no Trinity, could find one, shall not we, who know the true one, meditate the more effectually upon that, by occasion of this story? Let us therefore, with St. Bernard, consider *Trinitatem creatricem*, and *Trinitatem creatam*, A creating, and a created Trinity; a trinity, which the Trinity in heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, hath created in our souls, reason, memory, and will; and that we have super-created, added another trinity, suggestion, and consent, and delight in sin: and that God, after all this infuses another trinity, faith, hope, and charity, by which we return to our first; for so far, that father of meditation, St. Bernard, carries this consideration of the Trinity. Since therefore the confession of a Trinity is that which distinguishes us from Jews, and Turks, and all other professions, let us discern that beam of the Trinity, which the church hath showed us, in this text, and with the words of the church, conclude this part, *O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons, and one God, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.*

We are descended now to our second part, what passed between God and Abraham, after he had thus manifested himself unto him; where we noted first, that God admits, even expostulation, from his servants; almost rebukes and chidings from his servants. We need not wonder at Job's humility[13], that he did not despise his man, nor his maid, when they contended with him, for God does not despise that in us. God would have gone from Jacob when he *wrestled*, and Jacob *would not let him go*[14], and that prevailed with God. If we have an apprehension when we begin to pray, that God doth not hear us, not regard us, God is content that in the fervour of that prayer, we say with David, *Evigila Domine*, and *Surge Domine*, *Awake O Lord*, and *Arise O Lord;* God is content to be told, that he was in bed, and asleep, when he should hear us. If we have not a present deliverance from

[13] Job xxxi. 13. [14] Gen. xxxii. 26.

our enemies, God is content that we proceed with David, *Eripe manum de sinu, Pluck out thy hand out of thy bosom;* God is content to be told, that he is slack and dilatory when he should deliver us. If we have not the same estimation in the world, that the children of this world have, God is content that we say with Amos, *Pauperem pro calceamentis*, that *We are sold for a pair of shoes*[15]; and with St. Paul, that *We are the off-scouring of the world:* God is content to be told, that he is unthrifty, and prodigal of his servants' lives, and honours, and fortunes. Now, *Offer this to one of your princes*, says the prophet, *and see whether he will take it.* Bring a petition to any earthly prince, and say to him, *Evigila*, and *surge*, Would your majesty would awake, and read this petition, and so insimulate him of a former drowsiness in his government; say unto him, *Eripe manum*, Pull thy hand out of thy bosom, and execute justice, and so insimulate him of a former manacling and slumbering of the laws; say unto him, We are become as old shoes, and as off-scourings, and so insimulate him of a diminution, and dis-estimation fallen upon the nation by him, what prince would not (and justly) conceive an indignation against such a petitioner? which of us that heard him, would not pronounce him to be mad, to ease him of a heavier imputation? And yet our long-suffering, and our patient God, (must we say, our humble and obedient God?) endures all this: he endures more; for when Abraham came to this expostulation, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* God had said never a word, of any purpose to destroy Sodom, but he said only, *He would go see, whether they had done altogether, according to that cry, which was come up against them;* and Abraham comes presently to this vehemency: and might not the supreme Ordinary, God himself, go this visitation? might not the supreme Judge, God himself, go this circuit? But as long as Abraham kept himself upon this foundation, *It is impossible, that the Judge of all the earth should not do right*, God mis-interpreted nothing at Abraham's hand, but received even his expostulations, and heard him out, to the sixth petition.

Almost such an expostulation as this, Moses uses towards God; he asks God a reason of his anger, *Lord, why doth thy wrath*

[15] Amos ii. 6.

*wax hot against thy people*[16]? He tells him a reason, why he should not do so, *For thou hast brought them forth with a great power, and with a mighty hand:* and he tells them the inconveniences that might follow, *The Egyptians will say, He brought them out for mischief, to slay them in the mountain:* he imputes even perjury to God himself, and breach of covenant, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which were feoffees in trust, between God and his people, and he says, *Thou swearest to them, by thine own self, that thou wouldest not deal thus with them;* and therefore he concludes all with that vehemence, *Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent this evil purpose against them.* But we find a prayer, or expostulation, of much more exorbitant vehemence, in the stories of the Roman church, towards the blessed Virgin, (towards whom they use to be more mannerly and respective than towards her Son, or his Father) when at a siege of Constantinople, they came to her statue, with this protestation, Look you to the drowning of our enemies' ships, or we will drown you: *Si vis ut imaginem tuam non mergamus in mari, merge illos.* The farthest that Abraham goes in this place, is, that God is a Judge, and therefore must *do right:* for, *Far be wickedness from God, and iniquity from the Almighty; surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment*[17]. An usurer, an extortioner, an oppressor, a libeller, a thief, and adulterer, yea a traitor, makes shift to find some excuse, some flattery to his conscience; they say to themselves, The law is open, and if any be grieved, they may take their remedy, and I must endure it, and there is an end. But, since nothing holds of this oppressor, and manifold malefactor, but the sentence of the Judge, shall not the Judge do right? how must this necessarily shake the frame of all? An arbitrator or a chancellor, that judges by submission of parties, or according to the dictates of his own understanding, may have some excuse, he did as his conscience led him: but shall not a *judge*, that hath a certain law to judge by, *do right?* especially if he be such a judge, as is *Judge of the whole earth?* which is the next step in Abraham's expostulation.

Now, as long as there lies a certiorari from a higher court, or an appeal to an higher court, the case is not so desperate, if the

[16] Exod. xxxii. 11. [17] Job xxxii. 10.

judge do not right, for there is a future remedy to be hoped: if the whole state be incensed against me, yet I can find an escape to another country; if all the world persecute me, yet, if I be an honest man, I have a supreme court in myself, and I am at peace, in being acquitted in mine own conscience. But God is the Judge of all the earth; of this which I tread, and this earth which I carry about me; and when he judges me, my conscience turns on his side, and confesses his judgment to be right. And therefore St. Paul's argument, seconds, and ratifies Abraham's expostulation; *Is God unrighteous? God forbid;* for then, says the apostle, *how shall God judge the world*[18]? The pope may err, but then a council may rectify him: the king may err; but then, God, in whose hands the king's heart is, can rectify him. But if God, that judges all the earth, judge thee, there is no error to be assigned in his judgment, no appeal from God not thoroughly informed, to God better informed, for he always knows all evidence, before it be given. And therefore the larger the jurisdiction, and the higher the court is, the more careful ought the judge to be of wrong judgment; for Abraham's expostulation reaches in a measure to them, *Shall not the Judge of all* (or of a great part of the earth) *do right?*

Now what is the wrong, which Abraham dissuaded, and deprecated here? first, *Ne justi cum impiis*, That God would not destroy the just with the unjust, not make both their cases alike. This is an injustice, which never any bloody men upon earth, but those, who exceeded all; in their infamous purposes, the authors, and actors in the powder treason, did ever deliberately and advisedly, upon debate whether it should be so, or no, resolve, that all of both religions should perish promiscuously in the blowing up of that house. Here the devil would be God's ape; and as God had presented to St. Peter, a sheet of all sorts of creatures, clean and unclean, and bade him take his choice, kill and eat; so the devil would make St. Peter, in his imaginary successor, or his instruments, present God a sacrifice of clean and unclean, catholics and heretics, (in their denomination) and bid him take his choice; which action, whosoever forgets so, as that he forgets what was intended in it, forgets his religion, and

[18] Rom. iii. 6.

whosoever forgets it so, as that he forgets what they would do again, if they had power, forgets his reason. But this is not the way of God's justice; God is a God of harmony, and consent, and in a musical instrument, if some strings be out of tune, we do not presently break all the strings, but reduce and tune those, which are out of tune.

As gold whilst it is in the mine, in the bowels of the earth, is good for nothing, and when it is out, and beaten to the thinness of leaf-gold, it is wasted, and blown away, and quickly comes to nothing; but when it is tempered with such alloy, as it may receive a stamp and impression, then it is current and useful: so whilst God's justice lies in the bowels of his own decree and purpose, and is not executed at all, we take no knowledge that there is any such thing; and when God's justice is dilated to such an expansion, as it overflows all alike, whole armies with the sword, whole cities with the plague, whole countries with famine, oftentimes we lose the consideration of God's justice, and fall upon some natural causes, because the calamity is fallen so indifferently upon just and unjust, as that, we think, it could not be the act of God: but when God's justice is so alloyed with his wisdom, as that we see he keeps a Goshen in Egypt, and saves his servants in the destruction of his enemies, then we come to a rich and profitable use of his justice. And therefore Abraham presses this, with that vehement word, *Chalilah, absit:* Abraham serves a prohibition upon God, as St. Peter would have done upon Christ, when he was going up to Jerusalem to suffer, *Absit*, says he, *Thou shalt not do this.* But the word signifies more properly *prophanationem, pollutionem:* Abraham intends, that God should know, that it would be a profaning of his holy honour, and an occasion of having his name blasphemed amongst the nations, if God should proceed so, as to wrap up just and unjust, righteous and unrighteous, all in one condemnation, and one execution; *Absit, Be this far from thee.*

But Abraham's zeal extended farther than this; his desire and his hope was, that for the righteous' sake, the unrighteous might be spared, and reserved to a time of repentance. This therefore ministers a provocation to every man, to be as good as he can, not only for his own sake, but for others too. This made St.

Ambrose say, *Quantus murus patriæ, vir bonus:* An honest and religious man, is a wall to a whole city, a sea to a whole island. When our Saviour Christ observed, that they would press him with that proverb, *Medice, cura teipsum, Physician, heal thyself*[19], we see there, that himself was not his person, but his country was himself; for that is it that they intend by that proverb, *Heal thyself*, take care of them that are near thee, do that which thou doest here in Capernaum, at home; preach these sermons there; do these miracles there; cure thy country, and that is curing thyself. Live so, that thy example may be a precedent to others; live so, that for thy sake, God may spare others; and then, and not till then, thou hast done thy duty. God spares sometimes, *ob commixtionem sanguinis*, for kindred's sake, and for alliance; and therefore it behoves us to take care of our alliances, and planting our children in religious families. How many judgments do we escape, because we are the seed of Abraham, and made partakers of the covenant, which the Gentiles, who are not so, are overwhelmed under? God spares sometimes, *ob cohabitationem*, for good neighbourhood; he will not bring the fire near a good man's house: as here, in our text, he would have done in Sodom, and as he did save many, only because they were in the same ship with St. Paul[20]. And therefore, as in the other religion, the Jews have streets of their own, and the stews have streets of their own; so let us choose to make our dwellings, and our conversation of our own, and not affect the neighbourhood, nor the commerce of them who are of evil communication. Be good then, that thou mayest communicate thy goodness to others; and consort with the good, that thou mayest participate of their goodness. *Omnis sapiens stulti est redemptio*, is excellently said by Philo, A wise man is the saviour and reedemer of a fool; and, (as the same man says) though a physician when he is called, discern that the patient cannot be recovered, yet he will prescribe something, *Ne ob ejus negligentiam periisse videatur*, Lest the world should think he died by his negligence; how incurable, how incorrigible soever the world be, be thou a religious honest man, lest some child in thy house, or some servant of thine be damned, which might have been saved, if thou hadst given good

[19] Luke iv. 23. [20] Acts xxvii.

example. God's ordinary way is to save man by man; and Abraham thought it not out of God's way, to save man for man, to save the unjust for the just, the unrighteous, for the righteous' sake.

But if God do not take this way, if he do wrap up the just and the unjust in the same judgment, is God therefore unjust? God forbid. *All things come alike to all*, says Solomon; *one event to the righteous, and to the wicked, to the clean, and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the sinner, and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath*[21]. *There is one event of all*, says he; but, says he, *This is an evil*, that it is so: but what kind of evil? an evil of vexation; because the weak are sometimes scandalized that it is so, and the glory of God seems for a time to be obscured, when it is so, because the good are not discerned from the evil. But yet God, who knows best how to repair his own honour, suffers it, nay appoints it to be so, that just and unjust are wrapped up in the same judgment. The corn is as much beaten in the threshing, as the straw is; the just are as much punished here as the unjust. Because God of his infinite goodness, hath elected me from the beginning, therefore must he provide that I have another manner of birth, or another manner of death, than the reprobate have? Must he provide, that I be born into the world, without original sin, of a virgin, as his Son was, or that I go out of the world, by being taken away, as Enoch was, or as Elias? And though we have that one example of such a coming into the world, and a few examples of such a going out of the world, yet we have no example (not in the Son of God himself) of passing through this world, without taking part of the miseries and calamities of the world, common to just and unjust, to the righteous and unrighteous. If Abraham therefore should have intended only temporal destruction, his argument might have been defective: for Ezekiel, and Daniel, and other just men, were carried into captivity, as well as the unjust, and yet God is not unrighteous; God does it, and avows it, and professes that he will do it, and do it justly; *Occidam in te justum et injustum, I will cut off the righteous and unrighteous together*[22]. There is no man so righteous, upon whom

[21] Eccles. ix. 2. [22] Ezek. xxi. 3. Q

God might not justly inflict as heavy judgments, in this world, as upon the most unrighteous; though he have wrapped him up in the righteousness of Christ Jesus himself, for the next world, yet he may justly wrap him up in any common calamity falling upon the unrighteous here. But the difference is only in spiritual destruction. Abraham might justly apprehend a fear, that a sudden and unprepared death might endanger them for their future state; and therefore he does not pray, that they might be severed from that judgment, because, if they died with the unrighteous, they died as the unrighteous, if they passed the same way as they, out of this world, they therefore passed into the same state as they, in the next world, Abraham could not conclude so, but because the best men do always need all means of making them better, Abraham prays, that God would not cut them off, by a sudden destruction, from a considering, and contemplating the ways of his proceeding, and so a preparing themselves to a willing and to a thankful embracing of any way, which they should so discern to be his way. The wicked are suddenly destroyed, and do not see what hand is upon them, till that hand bury them in hell; the godly may die as suddenly, but yet he sees and knows it to be the hand of God, and takes hold of that hand, and by it is carrried up to heaven.

Now, if God be still just, though he punish the just with the unjust, in this life, much more may he be so, though he do not spare the unjust for the righteous' sake, which is the principal drift of Abraham's expostulation, or deprecation. God can preserve still, so as he did in Egypt. God hath the same receipts, and the same antidotes which he had, to repel the flames of burning furnaces, to bind or stupify the jaws of hungry lions, to blunt the edge of swords, and overflowing armies, as he had heretofore. Christ was invisible to his enemies, when he would escape away[23]; and he was impregnable to his enemies, when in his manifestation of himself, (*I am he*) they fell down before him; and he was invulnerable, and immortal to his enemies, as long as he would be so, for if he had not opened himself to their violence, no man could have taken away his soul; and where God sees such deliverances conduce more to his honour than our suffering

[23] John viii. 59; xviii. 6.

does, he will deliver us so in the times of persecution. So that God hath another way, and he had another answer for Abraham's petition; he might have said, There is no ill construction, no hard conclusion to be made, if I should take away the just with the unjust, neither is there any necessity, that I should spare the wicked for the righteous: I can destroy Sodom, and yet save the righteous; I can destroy the righteous, and yet make death an advantage to them; which way soever I take, I can do nothing unjustly.

But yet, though God do not bind himself to spare the wicked for the righteous, yet he descends to do so at Abraham's request. The jaw-bone of an ass, in the hand of Samson, was a devouring sword. The words of man, in the mouth of a faithful man, of Abraham, are a cannon against God himself, and batter down all his severe and heavy purposes for judgments. Yet, this comes not, God knows, out of the weight or force of our words, but out of the easiness of God. God puts himself into the way of a shot, he meets a weak prayer, and is graciously pleased to be wounded by that: God sets up a light, that we direct the shot upon him, he enlightens us with a knowledge, how, and when, and what to pray for; yea, God charges, and discharges the cannon himself upon himself; he fills us with good and religious thoughts, and appoints and leaves the Holy Ghost, to discharge them upon him, in prayer, for it is the Holy Ghost himself that prays in us. *Mauzzim*, which is, *The god of forces*[24], is not the name of our God, but of an idol; our God is the God of peace, and of sweetness; spiritual peace, spiritual honey to our souls; his name is *Deus optimus maximus;* he is both; he is all greatness, but he is all goodness first: he comes to show his greatness at last, but yet his goodness begins his name, and can never be worn out in his nature. He made the whole world in six days, but he was seven in destroying one city, Jericho. God threatens Adam, *If thou eat that fruit, in that day, Morte morieris, Thou shalt die the death;* here is a double death interminated in one day: now, only one of these deaths is spiritual death, and Adam never died that death; and for the other death, the bodily death, which might have been executed that day, Adam was reprieved above nine hundred years.

[24] Dan. xi. 38.

To lead all to our present purpose, God's descending to Abraham's petition, to spare the wicked for a few just, is first and principally to advance his mercy, that sometimes in abundant mercy, he does so; but it is also to declare, that there is none just and righteous. *Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem*, (says God in the prophet[25]) *and seek in the broad places, If ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon it.* Where God does not intimate, that he were unjust, if he did not spare those that were unjust, but he declares the general flood and inundation of unrighteousness upon earth, that upon earth there is not a righteous man to be found. If God had gone no farther in his promise to man, than that, if there were one righteous man, he would save all, this, in effect, had been nothing, for there was never any man righteous, in that sense and acceptation; he promised and sent one who was absolutely righteous, and for his sake hath saved us.

To collect all, and bind up all in one bundle, and bring it home to your own bosoms, remember, that though he appeared in men, it was God that appeared to Abraham; though men preach, though men remit sins, though men absolve, God himself speaks, and God works, and God seals in those men. Remember that nothing appeared to Abraham's apprehension but men, yet angels were in his presence; though we bind you not to a necessity of believing that every man hath a particular angel to assist him, (enjoy your Christian liberty in that, and think in that point so as you shall find your devotion most exalted, by thinking that it is, or is not so) yet know, that you do all that you do, in the presence of God's angels; and though it be in itself, and should be so to us, a stronger bridle, to consider that we do all in the presence of God, (who sees clearer than they, for he sees secret thoughts, and can strike immediately, which they cannot do, without commission from him) yet since the presence of a magistrate, or a preacher, or a father, or a husband, keeps men often from ill actions, let this prevail something with thee, to that purpose, that the angels of God are always present, though thou discern them not. Remember, that though Christ himself were not amongst the three angels, yet Abraham apprehended a greater

[25] Jerem. v. 1.

dignity, and gave a greater respect to one than to the rest; but yet without neglecting the rest too: apply thyself to such ministers of God, and such physicians of thy soul, as thine own conscience tells thee do most good upon thee; but yet let no particular affection to one, defraud another in his duties, nor impair another in his estimation. And remember too, that though God's appearing thus in three persons, be no irrefragable argument to prove the Trinity against the Jews, yet it is a convenient illustration of the Trinity to thee that art a Christian: and therefore be not too curious in searching reasons, and demonstrations of the Trinity, but yet accustom thyself to meditations upon the Trinity, in all occasions, and find impressions of the Trinity, in the three faculties of thine own soul, thy reason, thy will, and thy memory; and seek a reparation of that thy Trinity, by a new Trinity, by faith in Christ Jesus, by hope of him, and by a charitable delivering him to others, in a holy and exemplar life.

Descend thou into thyself, as Abraham ascended to God, and admit thine own expostulations, as God did his. Let thine own conscience tell thee not only thy open and evident rebellions against God, but even the immoralities, and incivilities that thou dost towards men, in scandalizing them, by thy sins; and the absurdities that thou committest against thyself, in sinning against thine own reason; and the uncleannesses, and consequently the treachery that thou committest against thine own body; and thou shalt see, that thou hadst been not only in better peace, but in better state, and better health, and in better reputation, a better friend, and better company, if thou hadst sinned less; because some of thy sins have been such as have violated the band of friendship; and some such as have made thy company and conversation dangerous, either for temptation, or at least for defamation. Tell thyself that thou art the judge, as Abraham told God that he was, and that if thou wilt judge thyself, thou shalt scape a severer judgment. He told God that he was judge of all the earth; judge all that earth that thou art; judge both thy kingdoms, thy soul and thy body; judge all the provinces of both kingdoms, all the senses of thy body, and all the faculties of thy soul, and thou shalt leave nothing for the last judgment. Mingle not the just and the unjust together; God did not so; do not

think good and bad all one; do not think alike of thy sins, and of thy good deeds, as though when God's grace had quickened them, still thy good works were nothing, thy prayers nothing, thine alms nothing in the sight and acceptation of God: but yet spare not the wicked for the just, continue not in thy beloved sin, because thou makest God amends some other way. And when all is done, as in God towards Abraham, his mercy was above all, so after all, *Miserere animæ tuæ*, Be merciful to thine own soul; and when the effectual Spirit of God hath spoken peace and comfort, and sealed a reconciliation to God, to thy soul, rest in that blessed peace, and enter into no such new judgment with thyself again, as should overcome thine own mercy, with new distractions, or new suspicions that thy repentance was not accepted, or God not fully reconciled unto thee. God, because he judges all the earth, cannot do wrong; if thou judge thy earth and earthly affections so, as that thou examine clearly, and judge truly, thou durst not do right, if thou extend not mercy to thyself, if thou receive not, and apply not cheerfully and confidently to thy soul, that pardon and remission of all thy sins, which the Holy Ghost, in that blessed state, hath given thee commission to pronounce to thine own soul, and to seal with his seal.

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## SERMON XLI.

*PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S, UPON TRINITY SUNDAY*, 1624.

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MATTHEW iii. 17.

**And lo, a voice came from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

IT hath been the custom of the Christian church to appropriate certain Scriptures to certain days, for the celebrating of certain mysteries of God, or the commemorating of certain benefits from God: they who consider the age of the Christian church, too high or too low, too soon or too late, either in the cradle, as it is

exhibited in the Acts of the Apostles, or bedrid in the corruptions of Rome, either before it was come to any growth, when persecutions nipped it, or when it was so overgrown, as that prosperity and outward splendour swelled it, they that consider the church so, will never find a good measure to direct our religious worship of God by, for the outward liturgies, and ceremonies of the church. But as soon as the Christian church had a constant establishment under Christian emperors, and before the church had her tympany of worldly prosperity under usurping bishops, in this outward service of God, there were particular Scriptures appropriated to particular days. Particular men have not liked this that it should be so: and yet that church which they use to take for their pattern, (I mean Geneva) as soon as it came to have any convenient establishment by the labours of that reverend man, who did so much in the rectifying thereof, admitted this custom of celebrating certain times, by the reading of certain Scriptures. So that in the pure times of the church, without any question, and in the corrupter times of the church, without any infection, and in the reformed times of the church, without any suspicion of backsliding, this custom hath been retained, which our church hath retained; and according to which custom, these words have been appropriated to this day, for the celebrating thereof, *And lo, a voice came*, &c.

In which words we have pregnant and just occasion to consider, first, the necessity of the doctrine of the Trinity; secondly, the way and means by which we are to receive our knowledge and understanding of this mystery; and thirdly, the measure of this knowledge, how much we are to know, or to inquire, in that unsearchable mystery: the *quid*, what it is; the *quomodo*, how we are to learn it; and the *quantum*, how far we are to search into it, will be our three parts. We consider the first of these, the necessity of that knowledge to a Christian, by occasion of the first particle, in the text, *and;* a particle of connexion, and dependance; and we see by this connexion, and dependance, that this revealing, this manifestation of the Trinity, in the text, was made presently after the baptism of Christ; and that intimates, and infers, that the first, and principal duty of him, who hath engrafted himself into the body of the Christian church, by bap-

tism, is to inform himself of the Trinity, in whose name he is baptized. Secondly, in the means, by which this knowledge of the Trinity is to be derived to us, in those words, (*Lo, a voice came from heaven, saying*) we note the first word, to be a word of correction, and of direction; *Ecce, behold*, leave your blindness, look up, shake off your stupidity, look one way or other; a Christian must not go on implicitly, inconsiderately, indifferently, he must look up, he must intend a calling: and then, *ecce* again, *behold*, that is, behold the true way; a Christian must not think he hath done enough, if he have been studious, and diligent in finding the mysteries of religion, if he have not sought them the right way: first, there is an *ecce corrigentis*, we are chidden, if we be lazy; and then, there is an *ecce dirigentis*, we are guided if we be doubtful. And from this, we fall into the way itself; which is, first, *a voice*, there must be something heard; for, take the largest sphere, and compass of all other kinds of proofs, for the mysteries of religion, which can be proposed, take it first, at the first, and weakest kind of proof, at the book of creatures, (which is but a faint knowledge of God, in respect of that knowledge, with which we must know him) and then, continue this first way of knowledge, to the last, and powerfullest proof of all, which is the power of miracles, not this weak beginning, not this powerful end, not this *alpha* of creatures, not this *omega* of miracles, can imprint in us that knowledge, which is our saving knowledge, nor any other means than a voice; for this knowing is believing, and, *How should they believe, except they hear?* says the apostle. It must be *vox, a voice*, and *vox de cœlis, a voice from heaven:* for, we have had *voces de terra*, voices of men, who have indeed but diminished the dignity of the doctrine of the Trinity, by going about to prove it by human reason, or to illustrate it by weak and low comparisons; and we have had *voces de inferis*, voices from the devil himself, in the mouths of many heretics, blasphemously impugning this doctrine; we have had *voces de profundis*, voices fetched from the depth of the malice of the devil, heretics; and *voces de medio*, voices taken from the ordinary strength of moral men, philosophers; but this is *vox de excelsis*, only that voice that comes from heaven, belongs to us in this mystery: and then lastly, it is *vox dicens, a voice saying*,

speaking, which is proper to man, for nothing speaks but man; it is God's voice, but presented to us in the ministry of man; and this is our way; to behold, that is, to depart from our own blindness, and to behold a way, that is showed us; but showed us in the word, and in the word of God, and in that word of God, preached by man. And after all this, we shall consider the measure of this knowledge, in those last words, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;* for, in that word, *meus, my*, there is the person of the Father; in the *Filius*, there is the person of the Son; and in the *hic est, this is*, there is the person of the Holy Ghost, for that is the action of the Holy Ghost, in that word, he is pointed at, who was newly baptized, and upon whom the Holy Ghost, in the Dove, was descended, and had tarried. But we shall take those words in their order, when we come to them.

First then, we noted the necessity of knowing the Trinity, to be pregnantly intimated in the first word, *et, and:* this connects it to the former part of the history, which is Christ's baptism, and presently upon that baptism, this manifestation of the holy Trinity. Consider a man, as a Christian, his first element is baptism, and his next is catechism; and in his catechism, the first is, to believe a Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There are in this man, this Christian, *tres nativitates*, says St. Gregory, three births; one, *per generationem*, so we are born of our natural mother; one, *per regenerationem*, so we are born of our spiritual mother, the church, by baptism; and a third, *per resurrectionem*, and so we are born of the general mother of us all, when the earth shall be delivered, not of twins, but of millions, when she shall empty herself of all her children, in the resurrection. And these three nativities our Saviour Christ Jesus had; of which three, *Hodie alter Salvatoris natalis*, says St. Augustine, This day is the day of Christ's second birth, that is, of his baptism. Not that Christ needed any regeneration; but that it was his abundant goodness, to sanctify in his person, and in his exemplar action, that element, which should be an instrument of our regeneration in baptism, the water, for ever. Even in Christ himself, *Honoratior secunda*, says that father, The second birth, which he had at his baptism, was the more honourable birth; for, *Ab*

*illa se, pater qui putabatur, Joseph excusat*, At his first birth, Joseph, his reputed father, did not avow him for his son; *In hac se, Pater qui non putabatur, insinuat*, At this his second birth, God, who was not known to be his Father before, declares that now: *Ibi laborabat suspicionibus mater, quia professioni deerat pater*, There the mother's honour was in question, because Joseph could not profess himself the father of the child; *Hic honoratur genetrix, quia Filium Divinitas protestatur*, Here her honour is repaired, and magnified, because the Godhead itself, proclaims itself to be the Father.

If then, Christ himself chose to admit an addition of dignity at his baptism, who had an eternal generation in heaven, and an innocent conception without sin, upon earth, let us not undervalue that dignity, which is afforded us by baptism, though our children be born within the covenant, by being born of Christian parents; for the covenant gives them *jus ad rem*, a right to baptism; children of Christian parents may claim baptism, which aliens to Christ cannot do; but yet they may not leave out baptism: a man may be within a general pardon, and yet have no benefit by it, if he sue it not out, if he plead it not; a child may have right to baptism, and yet be without the benefit of it, if it be neglected.

Christ began at baptism; natural things he did before; he fled into Egypt, to preserve his life from Herod's persecution, before: and a miraculous thing he did before; he overcame in disputation, the doctors in the temple, at twelve years old; but yet, neither of these, neither, before his circumcision, which was equivalent to baptism, to this purpose; but before he accepted, or instituted baptism, he did some natural, and some miraculous things. But his ordinary work which he came for, his preaching the Gospel, and thereby raising the frame for our salvation, in his church, he began not, but after his baptism: and then, after that, it is expressly and immediately recorded, that when he came out of the waters, *he prayed;* and then, the next thing in the history is, that he *fasted*, and upon that, *his temptation in the wilderness.* I mean no more in this, but this, That no man hath any interest in God, to direct a prayer unto him, how devoutly soever, no man hath any assurance of any effect of his endeavours

in a good life, how morally holy soever, but in relation to his baptism, in that seal of the covenant, by which he is a Christian: Christ took this sacrament, his baptism, before he did any other thing; and he took this, three years before the institution of the other sacrament of his body and blood: so that the Anabaptists obtrude a false necessity upon us, that we may not take the first sacrament, baptism, till we be capable of the other sacrament too; for, first in nature, *Prius nascimur, quam pascimur*, We are born before we are fed; and so, in religion, we are first born into the church, (which is done by baptism) before we are ready for that other food, which is not indeed milk for babes, but solid meat for stronger digestions.

They that have told us, that the baptism, that Christ took of John, was not the same baptism, which we Christians take in the church, speak impertinently; for John was sent by God to baptize[1]; and there is but one baptism in him. It is true, that St. Augustine calls John's baptism, *Præcursorium ministerium*, As he was a fore-runner of Christ, his baptism was a fore-running baptism; it is true, that Justin Martyr calls John's baptism, *Evangelicæ gratiæ præludium*, A prologue to the grace of the Gospel; it is true, that more of the fathers have more phrases of expressing a difference between the baptism of John, and the baptism of Christ: but all this is not *de essentia*, but *de modo*, not of the substance of the sacrament, which is the washing of our souls in the blood of Christ, but the difference was in the relation; John baptized *in Christum morituturum*, into Christ, who was to die, and we are baptized *in Christum mortuum*, into Christ who is already dead for us. Damascene expresses it fully, *Christus baptizatur suo baptismo:* Christ was baptized with his own baptism; it was John's baptism, and yet it was Christ's too. And so we are baptized with his baptism, and there neither is, nor was any other; and that baptism is to us, *Janua ecclesiæ*, as St. Augustine calls it, The door of the church, at that we enter, and *Investitura Christianismi*, The investing of Christianity, as St. Bernard calls it, there we put on Christ Jesus; and, (as he, whom we may be bold to match with these two floods of

[1] John i. 6.

spiritual eloquence, for his eloquence, that is Luther, expresses it) *Puerpera regni cœlorum*, The church in baptism, is as a woman delivered of child, and her child is the kingdom of heaven, and that kingdom she delivers into his arms who is truly baptized. This sacrament makes us Christians; this denominates us, both civilly, and spiritually; there we receive our particular names, which distinguish us from one another, and there we receive that name, which shall distinguish us from the nations, in the next world; at baptism we receive the name of Christians, and there we receive our Christian names.

When the disciples of Christ, in general, came to be called Christians[2], we find. It was a name given upon great deliberation; Barnabas had preached there, who was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, himself. But he went to fetch Paul too, a man of great gifts, and power in preaching; and both they continued a year preaching in Antioch, and there, first of all, *the disciples were called Christians;* before they were called *fideles*, and *fratres*, and *discipuli;* the faithful, and the brethren, and the disciples, and (as St. Chrysostom says) *De via*, Men that were in the way; for all the world besides, were beside him, who was *the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* But (by the way) we may wonder, what gave St. Chrysostom occasion of that opinion or that conjecture, since in the Ecclesiastic Story (I think) there is no mention of that name, attributed to the Christians: and in the Acts of the Apostles, it is named but once; when Saul desired letters to Damascus, to punish them, whom he found to be of *that way*[3]. Where we may note also, the zeal of St. Paul, (though then in a wrong cause) against them, who were of *that way*, that is, that way inclined; and our stupidity, who startle not at those men, who are not only inclined another way, a cross way, but labour pestilently to incline others, and hope confidently to see all incline that way again. Here then at Antioch, they began to be called Christians; not only out of custom, but, as it may seem, out of decree. For, if there belong any credit to that council, which the apostles are said to have held at Antioch[4], (of which council there was a copy, whether true or false, in Origen's

[2] Acts xi. 26. [3] Acts ix. 2. [4] Lorinus in Act. xi. 20.

library, within two hundred years after Christ) one canon in that council is, *Ut credentes in Jesum, quos tunc vocabant Galilæos, vocarentur Christiani*, That the followers of Christ, who, till then, were called Galilcans, should then be called Christians. There, in general, we were all called Christians; but, in particular, I am called a Christian, because I have put on Christ, in baptism.

Now, in considering the infinite treasure which we receive in baptism, insinuated before the text, *That the heavens opened*, that is, the mysteries of religion are made accessible to us, we may attain to them; and then, *the Holy Ghost descends*, (and he is a Comforter, whilst we are in ignorance, and he is a Schoolmaster to teach us all truths) and he comes as a dove, that is, brings peace of conscience with him, and he rests upon us as a dove, that is, requires simplicity, and an humble disposition in us, that not only as Elias opened and shut heaven, *Ut pluviam aut emitteret, aut teneret*, That he might pour out or withhold the rain; but (as that father, St. Chrysostom, pursues it) *Ita apertum, ut ipse conscendas, et alios, si velles, tecum levares*, Heaven is so opened to us in baptism, as that we ourselves may enter into it, and by our good life, lead others into it too: as we consider, I say, what we have received in baptism, so if we be not only *Dealbati Christiani*, (as St. Augustine speaks) White-limed Christians, Christians on the outside, we must consider what we are to do upon all this. We are baptized, *In plena et adulta Trinitate*, says St. Cyprian, Not in a Father without a Son, nor in either, or both, without a Holy Ghost, but in the fulness of the Trinity: and this mystery of the Trinity, is *Regula fidei*, says St. Hierome, It is the rule of our faith, this only regulates our faith, that we believe aright of the Trinity; it is *Dogma nostræ religionis*, says St. Basil, as though there were but this one article; It is, says he, the foundation, the sum, it is all the Christian religion, to believe aright of the Trinity. By this we are distinguished from the Jews, who accept no plurality of Persons; and by this we are distinguished from the Gentiles, who make as many several persons, as there are several powers, and attributes belonging to God. Our religion, our holy philosophy, our learning, as it is rooted in Christ, so it is not limited, not determined in Christ alone; we are not baptized in his name

alone, but our study must be the whole Trinity; for, he that believes not in the Holy Ghost, as well as in Christ, is no Christian: and, as that is true which St. Augustine says, *Nec laboriosius aliquid quæritur, nec periculosius alicubi erratur*, As there is not so steepy a place to clamber up, nor so slippery a place to fall upon, as the doctrine of the Trinity; so is that also true which he adds, *Nec fructuosius invenitur*, There is not so fulfilling, so accomplishing, so abundant an article as that of the Trinity, for it is all Christianity. And therefore let us keep ourselves to that way, of the manifestation of the Trinity, which is revealed in this text; and that way is our second part.

We must necessarily pass faster through the branches of this part, than the dignity of the subject, or the fecundity of words will well admit; but the clearness of the order must recompense the speed and despatch. First then, in this way here is an *ecce*, an awaking, an alarum, a calling us up, *ecce, behold.* First, an *ecce correctionis*, a voice of chiding, of rebuking. If thou lie still in thy first bed, as thou art merely a creature, and thinkest with thyself, that since the lily labours not, nor spins, and yet is gloriously clothed, since the fowls of the heavens sow not, nor reap, and yet are plentifully fed, thou mayest do so, and thou shalt be so; *ecce animam*, behold thou hast an immortal soul, which must have spiritual food, the bread of life, and a more durable garment, the garment of righteousness, and cannot be imprisoned and captivated to the comparison of a lily that spins not, or of a bird that sows not. If thou think thy soul sufficiently fed, and sufficiently clothed at first, in thy baptism, that that manna, and those clothes shall last thee all thy pilgrimage, all thy life, that since thou art once baptized, thou art well enough, *ecce fermentum*, take heed of that *leaven of the Pharisees*, take heed of them that put their confidence in the very act and character of the sacrament, and trust to that: for there is a confirmation belongs to every man's baptism; not any such confirmation as should intimate an impotency, or insufficiency in the sacrament, but out of an obligation, that that sacrament lays upon thee, that thou art bound to live according to that stipulation and contract, made in thy behalf, at thy receiving of that sacrament, there belongs a confirmation to that sacrament, a holy life, to make sure that salva-

tion, sealed to thee at first. So also, if thou think thyself safe, because thou hast left that leaven, that is, traditions of men, and livest in a reformed, and orthodox church, yet, *ecce Paradisum*, behold Paradise itself, even in Paradise, the bed of all ease, yet there was labour required; so is there required diligence, and a laborious holiness, in the right church, and in the true religion. If thou think thou knowest all, because thou understandest all the articles of faith already, and all the duties of a Christian life already, yet *ecce scalam*, behold the life of a Christian is a Jacob's ladder, and till we come up to God, still there are more steps to be made, more way to be gone. Briefly, to the most learned, to him that knows most, to the most sanctified, to him that lives best, here is an *ecce correctionis*, there is a farther degree of knowledge, a farther degree of goodness, proposed to him, than he is yet attained unto.

So it is an *ecce correctionis*, an *ecce instar stimuli*, God by calling us up to behold, rebukes us because we did not so, and provokes us to do so now: it is also an *ecce directionis*, an *ecce instar lucernæ*, God by calling us to behold, gives us a light whereby we may do so, and may discern our way: whomsoever God calls, to him he affords so much light, as that, if he proceed not by that light, he himself hath winked at that light, or blow out that light, or suffered that light to waste, and go out, by his long negligence. God does not call man with an *Ecce*, To behold him, and then hide himself from him; he does not bid him look, and then strike him blind. We are all born blind at first; in baptism God gives us that *collyrium*, that eye-salve, by which we may see, and actually by the power of that medicine, we do all see more than the Gentiles do. But yet, *Ecce trabs in oculis*[5], says Christ; Behold there is *a beam* in our *eye*, that is, natural infirmities. But for all this beam, when Christ bids us behold, we are able to see, by Christ's light, our own imperfections; though we have that beam, yet we are able to see that we have it. And when this light which Christ gives us, (which is his first grace) brings us to that, then Christ proceeds to that which follows there, *Projice trabem, Cast out the beam that is in thine eye*, and so we become able by that succeeding grace, to overcome our

[5] Matt. vii. 4.

former impediments; if Christ bid us behold, he gives us light, if he bid us cast out the beam, he gives us strength. There is an *Ecce mutus*, cast upon Zachary, *Behold thou shalt be dumb*[6], God punished Zachary's incredulity with dumbness; but there is never an *Ecce cæcus*, Behold thou shalt be blind, that God should call man to see, and then blow out the candle, or not show him a candle, if he were in utter darkness; for this is an *ecce directionis*, an *ecce lucernæ*, God calls and he directs, and lightens our paths; never reproach God so impiously as to suspect, that when he calls, he does not mean that we should come.

Well then, with what doth he enlighten thee? Why, *Ecce vox*, *Behold a voice*, *saying*. Now, for this voice in the text, by whom it was heard, as also by whom the *Dove* that descended was seen, is sometimes disputed, and with some perplexity amongst the fathers. Some think it was to Christ alone, because two of the evangelists, Mark and Luke, record the words in that phrase, *Tu es Filius*, not as we read it in our text, *This is*, but, *Thou art my beloved Son:* but so, there had been no use, neither of the *Dove*, nor of the *voice;* for Christ himself lacked no testimony, that he was that Son. Some think it was to Christ, and John Baptist, and not to the company; because, say they, The mystery of the Trinity was not to be presented to them, till a farther and maturer preparation; and therefore they observe, that the next manifestation of Christ, and so of the Trinity, by a like voice, was almost three years after this, in his transfiguration[7], after he had manifested this doctrine by a long preaching amongst them; and yet, even then, it was but to his apostles, and but to a few of them neither, and those two forbidden to publish too; and how long? till his resurrection; when by that resurrection he had confirmed them, then it was time to acquaint them with the doctrine of the Trinity. But for the doctrine of the Trinity, as mysterious as it is, it is insinuated and conveyed unto us, even in the first verse of the Bible, in that extraordinary phrase, *Creavit Dii*, *Gods*, Gods in the plural, *created heaven and earth;* there is an unity in the action, it is but *creavit*, in the singular, and yet there is a plurality in the Persons, it is not *Deus*, *God*, but *Dii*, *Gods*. The doctrine of the Trinity is the

[6] Luke i. 20. [7] Matt. xvii.

first foundation of our religion, and no time is too early for our faith, the simplest may believe it; and all time is too early for our reason, the wisest cannot understand it. And therefore, as Chrysostom is well followed in his opinion, so he is well worthy to be followed, that both the *Dove* was seen, and the *voice* was heard by all the company: for neither was necessary to Christ himself; and the voice was not necessary to John Baptist, because the sign which was to govern him, was the *Dove; He that sent me, said, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit come down, and tarry still, it is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* But to the company, both voice and Dove were necessary: for, if the voice had come alone, they might have thought, that that testimony had been given of John, of whom they had, as yet, a far more reverent opinion, than of Christ; and therefore God first points out the Person, and by the Dove declares him to all, which was he, and then, by that voice declares farther to them all, what he was. This benefit they had by being in that company, they saw, and they heard things conducing to their salvation; for though God work more effectually upon those particular persons in the congregation, who, by a good use of his former graces, are better disposed than others, yet to the most graceless man that is, if he be in the congregation, God vouchsafes to speak, and would be heard.

They that differ in the persons, who heard it, agree in the reason; all they heard it, in all their opinions, to whom it was necessary to hear it; and it is necessary to all us, to have this means of understanding and believing, to hear. Therefore God gives to all that shall be saved, *vocem*, his voice. We consider two other ways of imprinting the knowledge of God in man; first, in a dark and weak way, the way of nature, and the book of creatures; and secondly, in that powerful way, the way of miracles. But these, and all between these, are ineffectual without the word. When David says of the creatures, *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard*[8], (the voice of the creature is heard over all) St. Paul commenting upon those words, says, *They have heard, all the world hath heard*[9]; but what? The voice of the creature; now that is true, so much

[8] Psal. xix. 3. [9] Rom. x. 17.

all the world had heard then, and does hear still: but the hearing that St. Paul intends there, is such a hearing as begets *faith*, and that the voice of creature reaches not too. The voice of the creature alone, is but a faint voice, a low voice; nor any voice till the voice of the word inanimate it; for then when the word of God hath taught us any mystery of our religion, then the book of creatures illustrates, and establishes, and cherishes that which we have received by faith, in hearing the word: as a stick bears up, and succours a vine, or any plant, more precious than itself, but yet gave it not life at first, nor gives any nourishment to the root now: so the assistance of reason, and the voice of the creature, in the preaching of nature, works upon our faith, but the root, and the life is in the faith itself; the light of nature gives a glimmering before, and it gives a reflection after faith, but the meridional noon is in faith.

Now, if we consider the other way, the way of power, miracles, no man may ground his belief upon that, which seems a miracle to him. Moses wrought miracles, and Pharaoh's instruments wrought the like: we know, theirs were no true miracles, and we know Moses' were; but how do we know this? By another voice, by the word of God, who cannot lie: for, for those upon whom those miracles were to work on both sides, Moses, and they too, seemed to the beholders, diversly disposed to do miracles. One rule in discerning, and judging a miracle, is, to consider whether it be done in confirmation of a necessary truth: otherwise it is rather to be suspected for an illusion, than accepted for a miracle. The rule is intimated in Deuteronomy, where, though a prophet's prophecy do come to pass, yet, if his end be, to draw to other gods, he must be slain[10]. What miracles soever are pretended, in confirmation of the inventions of men, are to be neglected. God hath not carried us so low for our knowledge, as to creatures, to nature, nor so high, as to miracles, but by a middle way, by a *voice*.

But it is *vox de cœlis, a voice from heaven*. St. Basil applying (indeed with some wresting and detorting) those words in the Psal. 29. ver. 3, (*The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of glory maketh it to thunder,*) to this baptism of Christ, he

[10] Deut. xiii.

says, *Vox super aquas Joannes*, The words of John at Christ's baptism, were this voice that David intends; and then that manifestation which God gave of the Trinity, (whatsoever it were) altogether, that was the thunder of his Majesty: so this thunder then, was *vox de cœlis*, a voice from heaven: and in this voice the Person of the Father was manifested, as he was in the same voice at his transfiguration. Since this voice then is from heaven, and is the Father's voice, we must look for all our knowledge of the Trinity from thence. For, (to speak of one of those Persons, of Christ) *No man knoweth the Son, but the Father*[11]; Who then, but he, can make us know him? If any knew it, yet it is an inexpressible mystery, no man could reveal it; *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*[12]; if any could reveal it to us, yet none could draw us to believe it; *No man can come to me, except the Father draw him*[13]: so that all our voice of direction must be from thence, *de cœlis, from heaven.*

We have had *voces de inferis*, voices from hell, in the blasphemies of heretics; that the Trinity was but *cera extensa*, but as a roll of wax spread, or a dough cake rolled out, and so divided unto persons: that the Trinity was but a nest of boxes, a lesser in a greater, and not equal to one another; and then, that the Trinity was not only three Persons, but three Gods too; so far from the truth, and so far from one another have heretics gone, in the matter of the Trinity; and Cerinthus so far, in that one Person, in Christ, as to say, That Jesus, and Christ, were two distinct Persons; and that into Jesus, who, says he, was the son of Joseph, Christ, who was the Spirit of God, descended here at his baptism, and was not in him before, and withdrew himself from him again, at the time of his passion, and was not in him then; so that he was not born Christ, nor suffered not being Christ; but was only Christ in his preaching, and in his miracles; and in all the rest, he was but Jesus, says Cerinthus.

We have had *voces de inferis, de profundis*, from the depth of hell, in the malice of heretics, and we have had *voces de medio*,

[11] Matt. xi. 27. [12] Matt. xvi. 17. [13] John vi. 44.

voices from amongst us, inventions of men, to express, and to make us understand the Trinity, in pictures, and in comparisons: all which (to contract this point) are apt to fall into that abuse, which we will only note in one; at first, they used ordinarily to express the Trinity in four letters, which had no ill-purpose in it at first, but was a religious ease for their memories, in Catechisms: the letters were *Π*, and *Υ*, and *A*, and *Π*; the *Π* was *Πατὴρ*, and the *Υ* was *Υἱὸς*, and the two last belonged to the last Person, for *A* was *Αγιον*, and *Π* was *Πνεῦμα*, and so there was Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as if we should express it in *F*, and *S*, and *H*, and *G*. But this came quickly thus far into abuse, as that they thought, there could belong but three letters, in that picture, to the three Persons; and therefore allowing so many to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they took the last letter *P*, for *Petrus*, and so made Peter head of the church, and equal to the Trinity. So that for our knowledge, in this mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, let us evermore rest, *in voce de cœlis*, in that voice which came from heaven.

But yet it is *vox dicens*, *a voice saying*, speaking, a voice that man is capable of, and may be benefited by. It is not such a voice as that was, (which came from heaven too) when Christ prayed to God *to glorify his name*, that the people should say, some, That it was a *thunder*, some That it was an *angel that spake*[14]. They are the sons of thunder, and they are the ministerial angels of the church, from whom we must hear this voice of heaven: nothing can speak, but man: no voice is understood by man, but the voice of man; it is not *vox dicens*, that voice says nothing to me, that speaks not; and therefore howsoever the voice in the text were miraculously formed by God, to give this glory, and dignity to this first manifestation of the Trinity in the Person of Christ, yet because he hath left it for a permanent doctrine necessary to salvation, he hath left ordinary means for the conveying of it; that is, the same voice from heaven, the same word of God, but speaking in the ministry of man. And therefore for our measure of this knowledge, (which is our third and last part) we are to see, how Christian men, whose office it

[14] John xii. 28.

hath been to interpret Scriptures, that is, how the Catholic church hath understood these words, *Hic est Filius, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

How we are to receive the knowledge of the Trinity, Athanasius hath expressed as far as we can go; Whosoever will be saved, he must believe it: but the manner of it is not exposed so far as to his belief. That question of the prophet, *Quis enarrabit?* Who shall declare this? carries the answer with it, *Nemo enarrabit.* No man shall declare it. But a manifestation of the Being of the Trinity, they have always apprehended in these words, *Hic est Filius, This is my beloved Son.* To that purpose therefore, we take, first, the words to be expressed by this evangelist St. Matthew, as the voice delivered them, rather than as they are expressed by St. Mark, and St. Luke; both which have it thus, *Tu es, Thou art my beloved Son*, and not *Hic est, This is*; they two being only careful of the sense, and not of the words, as it falls out often amongst the evangelists, who differ oftentimes in recording the words of Christ, and of other persons. But where the same voice spake the same words again, in the transfiguration, there all the evangelists express it so, *Hic est, This is*, and not *Tu es, Thou art my beloved Son*; and so it is, where St. Peter makes use by application of that history, it is *Hic est*, and not *Tu es*[15]. So that this *Hic est*, This man, designs him who hath that mark upon him, that the Holy Ghost was descended upon him, and tarried upon him; for so far went the sign of distinction given to John, the Holy Ghost was to descend and tarry; *Manet*, says St. Hieronie, The Holy Ghost tarries upon him, because he never departs from him, *Sed operatur quando Christus vult, et quomodo vult*, The Holy Ghost works in Christ, when Christ will, and as Christ will; and so the Holy Ghost tarried not upon any of the prophets; they spoke what he would, but he wrought not when they would. St. Gregory objects to himself, that there was a perpetual residence of the Holy Ghost upon the faithful, out of those words of Christ, *The Comforter shall abide with you for ever*; but as St. Gregory answers himself, This is not a plenary abiding, and *Secundum omnia dona*, In a full operation, according to all his gifts, as he tarried upon Christ: neither

[15] 2 Pet. i. 17.

indeed is that promise of Christ's to particular persons, but to the whole body of the church.

Now this residence of the Holy Ghost upon Christ, was his unction; properly it was that, by which he was the Messiah, that he was anointed above his fellows; and therefore St. Hierome makes account, that Christ received his unction, and so his office of Messiah, at this baptism, and this descending of the Holy Ghost upon him: and he thinks it therefore, because presently after baptism, he went to preach in the synagogue, and he took for his text those words of the prophet Esay, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me, that I should preach the Gospel to the poor*[16]. And when he had read the text, he began his sermon thus, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears*. But we may be bold to say, that this is mistaken by St. Hierome; for the unction of Christ by the Holy Ghost, by which he was anointed, and sealed into the office of Messiah, was in the over-shadowing of the Holy Ghost in his conception, in his assuming our nature: this descending now at his baptism, and this residence, were only to declare, that there was a Holy Ghost, and that Holy Ghost dwelt upon this person.

It is *Hic*, This Person; and it is *Hic est*, This is my Son; it is not only *Fuit*, He was my Son, when he was in my bosom, nor only *Erit*, He shall be so, when he shall return to my right hand again; God does not only take knowledge of him in glory; but *est*, he is so now; now in the exinanition of his Person, now in the evacuation of his glory, now that he is preparing himself to suffer scorn, and scourges, and thorns, and nails, in the ignominious death of the cross, now he is the Son of the glorious God; Christ is not the less the Son of God for this eclipse.

*Hic est*, This is he, who for all this lowness is still as high as ever he was, and that height is, *est Filius*, he is the Son. He is not *servus*, the servant of God; or not that only, for he is that also. *Behold my servant*, (says God of him, in the prophet) *I will stay upon him, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*[17]. But Christ is this Servant, and a Son too: and not a

[16] Isaiah LXI. 1. [17] Isaiah XLII. 1.

Son only; for so we observe divers filiations in the school; *Filiationem vestigii*, that by which all creatures, even in their very being, are the sons of God, as Job calls God, *Pluviæ Patrem, The Father of the rain;* and so there are other filiations, other ways of being the sons of God. But *hic est*, this Person is, as the force of the article expresses it, and presses it, *ille Filius*, the Son, that Son, which no son else is, neither can any else declare how he is that which he is.

This Person then is still the Son, and *Meus Filius*, says God, *My Son.* He is the Son of Abraham, and so within the covenant; as well provided by that inheritance, as the son of man can be naturally. He is the Son of a Virgin, conceived without generation, and therefore ordained for some great use. He is the Son of David, and therefore royally descended; but his dignity is in the *Filius meus*, that God avows him to be his Son; for, *Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son*[18]? But to Christ he says in the prophet, *I have called thee by thy name:* and what is his name? *Meus es tu, Thou art mine. Quem a me non separat Deitas*, says Leo, *non dividit potestas, non discernit æternitas:* Mine so, as that mine infiniteness gives me no room nor space beyond him, he reaches as far as I, though I be infinite; My Almightiness gives me no power above him, he hath as much power as I, though I have all; my eternity gives me no being before him, though I were before all: in mine omnipotence, in mine omnipresence, in mine omniscience, he is equal partner with me, and hath all that is mine, or that is myself, and so he is *mine.*

*My Son*, and *My beloved Son;* but so we are all, who are his sons, *Deliciæ ejus*, says Solomon[19], His delight, and his contentment is to be with the sons of men. But here the article is extraordinarily repeated again, *Ille dilectus*, That beloved Son, by whom, those, who were neither beloved, nor sons, became the beloved sons of God; for, there is so much more added, in the last phrase, *In quo complacui, In whom I am well pleased.*

Now, these words are diversly read. St. Augustine says, some copies that he had seen, read them thus, *Ego hodie genui te, This*

[18] Heb. i. 5. [19] Prov. viii. 31.

*is my beloved Son, this day have I begotten him:* and with such copies, it seems, both Justin Martyr, and Irenæus met, for they read these words so, and interpret them accordingly: but these words are misplaced, and mistransferred out of the second Psalm, where they are. And as they change the words, and instead of *In quo complacui, In whom I am well pleased*, read, *This day have I begotten thee;* St. Cyprian adds other words, to the end of these, which are, *Hunc audite, Hear him:* which words, when these words were repeated at the transfiguration, were spoken, but here, at the baptism, they were not, what copy soever misled St. Cyprian, or whether it were the failing of his own memory. But St. Chrysostom gives an express reason, why those words were spoken at the transfiguration, and not here: because, says he, Here was only a purpose of a manifestation of the Trinity, so far, as to declare their Persons, who they were, and no more: at the transfiguration, where Moses and Elias appeared with Christ, there God had a purpose to prefer the Gospel above the law, and the prophets, and therefore in that place he adds that, *Hunc audite, Hear him*, who first fulfils all the law, and the prophets, and then preaches the Gospel. He was so well pleased in him, as that he was content *to give all them, that received him, power to become the sons of God*, too; as the apostle says, *By his grace, he hath made us accepted in his beloved*[20].

Beloved, that you may be so, come up from your baptism, as it is said that Christ did; rise, and ascend to that growth, which your baptism prepared you to: and the heavens shall open, as then, even *cataractæ cœli*, all the windows of heaven shall open, and rain down blessings of all kinds, in abundance; and the Holy Ghost shall descend upon you, as a dove, in his peaceful coming, in your simple, and sincere receiving him; and he shall rest upon you, to effect and accomplish his purposes in you. If he rebuke you, (as Christ when he promises the Holy Ghost, though he call him *a Comforter*, says, That *he shall rebuke the world* of divers things[21]) yet he shall dwell upon you as a dove, *Quæ si mordet, osculando mordet*, says St. Augustine: If the dove bite, it bites with kissing, if the Holy Ghost rebuke, he rebukes with

[20] Eph. i. 6. [21] John xvi. 7.

comforting. And so baptized, and so pursuing the contract of your baptism, and so crowned with the residence of his blessed Spirit, in your holy conversation, he shall breathe a soul into your soul, by that voice of eternal life, *You are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased.*

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## SERMON XLII.

*PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S, UPON TRINITY SUNDAY,* 1627.

REVELATIONS iv. 8.

**And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.**

THESE words are part of that Scripture, which our church hath appointed to be read for the Epistle of this day. This day, which besides that it is the Lord's day, the Sabbath day, is also especially consecrated to the memory, and honour of the whole Trinity. The feast of the nativity of Christ, Christmas day, which St. Chrysostom calls *Metropolin omnium festorum*, The metropolitan festival of the church, is intended principally to the honour of the Father, who was glorified in that humiliation of that Son, that day, because in that, was laid the foundation, and first stone of that house and kingdom, in which God intended to glorify himself in this world, that is, the Christian church. The feast of Easter is intended principally to the honour of the Son himself, who upon that day, began to lift up his head above all those waters which had surrounded him, and to shake off the chains of death, and the grave, and hell, in a glorious resurrection. And then, the feast of *Pentecost* was appropriated to the honour of the honour of the Holy Ghost, who by a personal falling upon the apostles, that day, enabled them to propagate this glory of the Father, and this death, and resurrection of the Son, to the ends

of the world, to the ends in extension, to all places, to the ends in duration, to all times.

Now, as St. Augustine says, *Nullus eorum extra quemlibet eorum est*, Every Person of the Trinity is so in every other person, as that you cannot think of a father, (as a father) but that there falls a son into the same thought, nor think of a person that proceeds from others, but that they, from whom he, whom ye think of, proceeds, falls into the same thought, as every person is in every person; and as these three Persons are contracted in their essence into one Godhead, so the church hath also contracted the honour belonging to them, in this kind of worship, to one day, in which the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as they are severally, in those three several days, might be celebrated jointly, and altogether. It was long before the church did institute a particular festival, to this purpose. For, before, they made account that that verse, which was upon so many occasions repeated in the Liturgy, and church service, (*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*) had a convenient sufficiency in it, to keep men in a continual remembrance of the Trinity. But when by that extreme inundation, and increase of Arians, these notions of distinct Persons in the Trinity, came to be obliterated, and discontinued, the church began to refresh herself, in admitting into the forms of Common Prayer, some more particular notifications, and remembrances of the Trinity; and at last, (though it were very long first, for this festival of this *Trinity Sunday*, was not instituted above four hundred years since) they came to ordain this day. Which day, our church, according to that peaceful wisdom, wherewithal the God of peace, of unity, and concord, had inspired her, did, in the Reformation, retain, and continue, out of her general religious tenderness, and holy loathness, to innovate anything in those matters which might be safely, and without superstition continued and entertained. For our church, in the Reformation, proposed not that for her end, how she might go from Rome, but how she might come to the truth; nor to cast away all such things as Rome had depraved, but to purge away those depravations, and conserve the things themselves, so restored to their first good use.

For this day then, were these words appointed by our church;

and therefore we are sure, that in the notion, and apprehension, and construction of our church, these words appertain to the Trinity. In them therefore we shall consider, first what, those four creatures were, which are notified, and designed to us, in the names, and figures of *four beasts;* and then, what these four creatures did; Their persons, and their action will be our two parts of this text. In each of which we shall have three branches; in the first these, first, simply who they were; and then, their qualification as they are furnished with wings, *Each of them had six wings;* and then lastly, in that first part, what is intended in their eyes, for, *They were full of eyes within;* and in these three, we shall determine that first part, the Persons. And then in the second, our first branch will be, their alacrity, their ingenuity, their free and open profession of their zeal to God's service; They did it, says the text, *Dicentes, Saying*, publishing, declaring, without disguises or modifications. And our second branch, Their assiduity, that which they did, they did incessantly, *They ceased not day nor night*, says our text; no occasional emergencies, no loss, no trouble interrupted their zeal to God's service. And then the last is, that that which they did, first with so much ingenuity, and then with so much assiduity, first so openly, and then so constantly, was the celebration of the Trinity, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;* which is the entire body of the Christian religion; that they professed openly, and constantly, all the parts of their religion, are also the three branches, in which we shall determine our second part, their action.

First then, for our first branch, in our first part, the persons intended in these four creatures, the apostle says, *Whatsoever things are written aforetime, are written for our learning*[1]; but yet, not so for our learning, as that we should think always to learn, or always to have a clear understanding of all that is written; for it is added there, *That we, through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope;* which may well admit this exposition, that those things which we understand not yet, we may hope that we shall, and we must have patience till we do. For there may be many places in Scripture, (especially

[1] Rom. xv. 4.

in prophetical Scripture) which, perchance, the church of God herself shall not understand, till those prophecies be fulfilled, and accomplished. In the understanding of this place, what, or who these four creatures are, there is so much difficulty, so much perplexity, as that amongst the interpretations of very learned, and very reverend, and very pertinent expositors, it is easy to collect thirty several opinions, thirty several significations of these four creatures.

The multiplicity of these interpretations intimates thus much, that that man that believes the Trinity, can scarce turn upon anything, but it assists, and advances, and illustrates that belief; as diverse from one another as their thirty expositions are, they all agree, that be our four creatures what they will, that which they do, is to celebrate the Trinity; he that seeks proof for every mystery of religion, shall meet with much darkness; but he that believes first, shall find everything to illustrate his faith. And then, this multiplicity of interpretations intimates thus much more, that since we cannot give *sensum adæquatum*, any such interpretation of these four creatures, but that another, as probable as it, may be given, it may be sufficient, and it is best, (as in all cases of like intricacy) to choose such a sense, as may most advance the general purpose, and intention of the place, which is, in this place, the celebration of the Trinity.

So therefore we shall do. And considering that amongst these manifold expositors, some bind themselves exactly, rigidly, superciliously, yea superstitiously to the number of *four*, and that therefore these *four creatures* must necessarily signify something, that is limited in the number of four, no more, no less, (either the four monarchies, or the four patriarchs, or the four doctors of the church, or the four cardinal virtues, or the four elements, or the four quarters of the world, into all which, and many more such, rather allusions, than interpretations, these various expositors have scattered themselves) and then considering also that divers others of these expositors out of a just observation, That nothing is more ordinary in this Book of the Revelation, than by a certain and finite number, to design and signify an uncertain and infinite, (for, otherwise when we are told, *That there were twelve thousand sealed of every tribe*, we should know the certain

number of all the Jews that were saved, which certainly is not St. John's purpose in that place; but in the greatness of that number, to declare the largeness of God's goodness to that people) considering I say, that divers of these expositors, have extended their interpretation beyond the number of *four*, we make account that we do best, if we do both; if we stop upon the number of *four*, and yet pass on to a greater number too. And so we shall well do, if we interpret these *four creatures*, to be first and principally the four evangelists, (and that is the most common interpretation of the ancients) and then enlarge it to all the ministers of the Gospel, which is (for the most part) the interpretation of the later men. So then, the action being an open and a continual profession of the whole Christian religion, in the celebration of the Trinity, which is the distinctive character of a Christian, the persons that do this, are all they that constitute the hierarchy, and order of the church; all they that execute the ministry, and dispensation of the Gospel; which Gospel is laid down, and settled and established radically in the four evangelists; all they are these four creatures. And farther we need not carry this first branch, which is the notification of these persons; for their qualification is the larger consideration.

And before we come to their qualification, in the text, first, as they are said *to have six wings*, and then as they are said *to be full of eyes*, we look upon them, as they are formed, and designed to us, in the verse immediately before the text; where, the *first* of these *four creatures* hath the face of a *lion*, the *second* of a *calf*, or an *ox*, the *third* of a *man*, and the *fourth* of an *eagle*. Now, *Quatuor animalia sunt ecclesiæ doctores*, says St. Ambrose; These four creatures are the preachers of the Gospel; that we had established afore; but then, we add with St. Ambrose, *Eandem significationem habet primum animal, quod secundum, quod tertium, quod quartum;* All these four creatures make up but one creature; all their qualities concur to the qualification of a minister; every minister of God is to have all, that all four had; the courage of a *lion*, the laboriousness of an *ox*, the perspicuity and clear sight of the *eagle*, and the humanity, the discourse, the reason, the affability, the appliableness of a *man*. St. Dionys the *Areopagite* had the same consideration as St. Ambrose had,

before him. He imprints it, he expresses it, and extends it thus; *In leone vis indomabilis;* In every minister, I look for such an invincible courage, as should be of proof, against persecution, which is a great, and against preferment, which is a greater temptation; that neither fears, nor hopes shake his constancy; neither his Christian constancy, to stagger him, nor his ministerial constancy, to silence him; for this is *vis indomabilis*, the courage required in the minister as he is a *lion*. And then says that father; *In bove vis salutaris*, In every minister, as he is said to be an *ox*, I look for labour; that he be not so over-grown, nor stall-fed, that he be thereby lazy; he must labour; and then, as the labour of the ox is, his labour must be employed upon useful and profitable things, things that conduce to the clearing, not the perplexing of the understanding; and to the collecting, the uniting, the fixing, and not the scattering, the dissolving, the pouring out of a fluid, an unstable, an irresolved conscience; things of edification, not speculation; for this is that *vis salutaris*, which we require in every minister; that he labour at the plough, and plough the right ground; that he preach for the saving of souls, and not for the sharpening of wits. And then again, *in aquila vis speculatrix;* as the minister is presented in the notion and quality of an *eagle*, we require both an open eye, and a piercing eye; first, that he dare look upon other men's sins, and be not fain to wink at their faults, because he is guilty of the same himself, and so, for fear of a recrimination, incur a prevarication; and then, that he be not so dim-sighted, that he must be fain to see all through other men's spectacles, and so preach the purposes of great men, in a factious popularity, or the fancies of new men, in a schismatical singularity; but, with the eagle, be able to look to the sun; to look upon the constant truth of God in his Scriptures, through his church; for this is *vis speculatrix*, the open and the piercing eye of the eagle. And then lastly, *in homine vis ratiocinatrix;* as the minister is represented in the notion and quality of a *man*, we require a gentle, a supple, an appliable disposition, a reasoning, a persuasive disposition; that he do not always press all things with authority, with censures, with excommunications; that he put not all points of religon, always upon that one issue, *Quicunque vult salvus esse*, If you will be saved, you must believe

this, all this, and *qui non crediderit, damnabitur*, if you doubt of this, any of this, you are infallibly, necessarily damned; but, that he be also content to descend to men's reason, and to work upon their understanding, and their natural faculties, as well as their faith, and to give them satisfaction, and reason (as far as it may be had) in that which they are to believe; that so as the apostle, though he had authority to command, yet did *Pray them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God*, so the minister of God, though (as he is bound to do) he do tell them what they are bound to believe, yet he also tells them, why they are to believe it; for this is *vis ratiocinatrix*, the holy gentleness and appliableness, implied in that form of a man.

And so you have this man composed of his four elements; this creature made of these four creatures; this minister made of a lion, an ox, an eagle, and a man; for no one of these, nor all these but one, will serve; the lion alone, without the eagle, is not enough; it is not enough to have courage and zeal, without clear sight and knowledge; nor enough to labour, except we apply ourselves to the capacity of the hearer; all must have all, or else all is disordered; zeal, labour, knowledge, gentleness.

Now besides these general qualifications, laid down as the foundation of the text, in the verse before it, in the text itself these four creatures, being first the four evangelists, and consequently, or by a just and fair accommodation, all the preachers of the Gospel, which limit themselves in the doctrine laid down in the four evangelists, have also *wings* added unto them; wings, first for their own behoof and benefit, and then, wings for the benefit and behoof of others. They have wings to raise themselves from the earth; that they do not entangle themselves in the business of this world; but still to keep themselves upon the wing, in a heavenly conversation, ever remembering that they have another element than sea or land, as men whom Christ Jesus hath set apart, and in some measure made mediators between him and other men, as his instruments of their salvation. And then as for themselves, so have they wings for others too, that they may be always ready to succour all, in all their spiritual necessities. For as those words are well understood by many of

the ancients, *To the woman were given two wings of an eagle*[2], that is, to the church were given able and sufficient ministers, to carry and convey her over the nations: so are those words which are spoken of God himself, appliable to his ministers, that first, *The eagle stirreth up her nest*[3] the preacher stirs and moves, and agitates the holy affections of the congregation, that they slumber not in a senselessness of that which is said, *The eagle stirreth up her nest*, and then as it is added there, *She fluttereth over her young*; the preacher makes a holy noise in the conscience of the congregation, and when he hath awakened them, by stirring the nest, he casts some claps of thunder, some intimidations, in denouncing the judgments of God, and he flings open the gates of heaven, that they may hear, and look up, and see a man sent by God, with power to infuse his fear upon them; *So she fluttereth over her young;* but then, as it follows there, *She spreadeth abroad her wings;* she over-shadows them, she enwraps them, she arms them with her wings, so as that no other terror, no other fluttering but that which comes from her, can come upon them; the preacher doth so infuse the fear of God into his auditory, that first, they shall fear nothing but God, and then they shall fear God, but so, as he is God; and God is mercy; God is love; and his minister shall so spread his wings over his people, as to defend them from all inordinate fear, from all suspicion and jealousy, from all diffidence and distrust in the mercy of God; which is farther expressed in that clause, which follows in the same place, *She taketh them and beareth them upon her wings;* when the minister hath awakened his flock by the stirring of the nest, and put them in this holy fear, by this which the Holy Ghost calls a fluttering; and then provided, by spreading his wings, that upon this fear there follow not a desperation; then he sets them upon the top of his best wings, and shows them the best treasure that is committed to his stewardship, he shows them heaven, and God in heaven, sanctifying all their crosses in this world, inanimating all their worldly blessings, raining down his blood into their emptiness, and his balm into their wounds, making their bed in all their sickness, and preparing their seat, where he stands soliciting

[2] Rev. xii. 14. [3] Deut. xxxii. 13.

their cause, at the right hand of his Father. And so the minister hath the wings of an eagle, that every soul in the congregation may see as much as he sees, that is, a particular interest in all the mercies of God, and the merits of Christ.

So then, these ministers of God have that double use of their eagle's wings; first, *Ut volent ad escam*[4], (as it is in Job) That they may fly up to receive their own food, their instructions at the mouth and word of God; and then, *Ut ubi cadaver sit, ibi statim adsit*[5], (as it is in Job also) where the dead are, they also may be; that where any lie, *Pro mortuis*[6], (as St. Paul speaks) *For dead*, as good as dead, ready to die, upon their deathbed, they may be ready to assist them, and to minister spiritual physic, opportunely, seasonably, proportionably to their spiritual necessities; that they may pour out upon such sick souls, that name of *Jesus*, which is *oleum effusum*, an oil, and a balm, always pouring, and always spreading itself upon all green wounds, and upon all old sores; that they may minister to one in his hot and pestilent presumptions, an opiate, of Christ's *tristis anima*, a remembrance, that even Christ himself had a sad soul towards his death, and a *quare dereliquisti*, some apprehension, that God, though his God, had forsaken him. And that therefore, no man, how righteous soever, may presume, or pass away without fear and trembling; and then, to minister to another, in his lethargies, and apoplexies, and damps, and inordinate dejections of spirit, Christ's cordials, and restoratives, in his *clarifica me Pater*, in an assurance, that his Father, though he have laid him down here, whether in an inglorious fortune, or in a disconsolate bed of sickness, will raise him, in his time, to everlasting glory. So these eagles are to have wings, to fly *ad cadaver*, to the dead, to those who are so dying a bodily death, and also, where any lie dead in the practice and custom of sin, to be industrious and earnest in calling them to life again, so as Christ did Lazarus, by calling aloud; not aloud in the ears of other men, so to expose a sinner to shame, and confusion of face, but aloud in his own ears, to put home the judgments of God, thereby to plough and harrow that stubborn heart, which will not be kneaded, nor otherwise reduced to an

[4] Job ix. 26. [5] Job xxxix. 33. [6] 1 Cor. xv. 29.

uprightness. For these uses, to raise themselves to heavenly contemplations, and to make haste to them that need their assistance, the ministers of God have wings; wings of great use; especially now, when there is *coluber in via*, a snake in every path, a seducer in every house; when as the devil is busy, because he knows his time is short, so his instruments are busy, because they think their time is beginning again; therefore the minister of God hath wings.

And then, their wings are numbered in our text; they have *six wings*. For by the consent of most expositors, those whom St. John presents in the figure of these *four creatures* here, and those whom the prophet Isaiah calls *Seraphim*[7], are the same persons; the same office, and the same voice is attributed unto those *seraphim* there, as unto these *four creatures* here; those as well as these, spend their time in celebrating the Trinity, and in crying, *Holy, holy, holy*. The Holy Ghost sometimes presents the ministers of the Gospel, as *seraphim* in glory, that they might be known to be the ministers and dispensers of the mysteries and secrets of God, and to come *a latere*, from his counsel, his cabinet, his bosom. And then on the other side, that you might know, that the dispensation of these mysteries of your salvation, is by the hand and means of men, taken from amongst yourselves, and that therefore you are not to look for revelations, nor ecstasies, nor visions, nor transportations, but to rest in God's ordinary means, he brings those persons down again from that glorious representation, as the *seraphim*, to creatures of an inferior, of an earthly nature. For, though it be by the sight, and in the quality and capacity of those glorious *seraphim*, that the minister of God receives his commission, and instructions, his orders, and his faculties, yet the execution of his commission, and the pursuing of his instructions towards you, and in your behalf, is in that nature, and in that capacity, as they have the courage of the *lion*, the laboriousness of the *ox*, the perspicuity of the *eagle*, and the affability of *man*.

These winged persons then, (winged for their own sakes, and winged for yours) these ministers of God, (thus designed by Esay, as heavenly *seraphim*, to procure them reverence from you,

[7] Isaiah vi. 3.

and by St. John, as earthly creatures, to teach you, how near to yourselves God hath brought the means of your salvation, in his visible, and sensible, in his appliable, and apprehensible ordinances) are, in both places, (that of Esay, and this in our text) said *to have six wings;* and *six*, to this use, in Esay, *with two they cover their face, with two their feet, and with two they fly.* They cover their face; not all over; for then, neither the prophet there, nor the evangelist here, could have known them to have had these likenesses, and these proportions. The ministers of God are not so covered, so removed from us, as that we have not means to know them. We know them by their face; that is, by that declaration which the church hath given of them to us, in giving them their orders, and their power over us; and we know them by their voice; that is, by their preaching of such doctrine, as is agreeable to those articles which we have sucked in from our infancy. The minister's face is not so covered with these wings, as that the people have no means to know him; for his calling is manifest, and his doctrine is open to proof and trial: but they are said to cover their face, because they dare not look confidently, they cannot look fully upon the majesty of the mysteries of God. The evangelists themselves, and they that ground their doctrine upon them, (all which together, as we have often said, make up these four persons, whom Esay calls *seraphim*, and St. John inferior creatures) have not seen all that belongs to the nature and essence of God, not all in the attributes and properties of God, not all in the decrees and purposes of God, no, not in all the execution of those purposes and decrees; we do not know all that God intends to do: we do not know all that God intends in that which he hath done. Our faces are covered from having seen the manner of the eternal generation of the Son, or of the eternal proceeding of the Holy Ghost, or the manner of the presence of Christ in the sacrament. The ministers of God are so far open-faced towards you, as that you may know them, and try them by due means to be such; and so far open-faced towards God, as that they have seen in him and received from him, all things necessary for the salvation of your souls; but yet, their faces are covered too; some things concerning God, they

have not seen themselves, nor should go about to reveal, or teach to you.

And it is not only their faces that are covered, but their feet too. Their covered faces are especially directed to God; denoting their modesty in forbearing unrevealed mysteries: their covered feet are especially directed to you; they should not be curious in searching into all God's actions, nor you in searching into all theirs; their ways, their actions, their lives, their conversations should not be too curiously searched, too narrowly pryed into, too severely interpreted by private men, as they are but such, because, in so doing, the danger and the detriment is thus far likely to fall upon yourselves, that when the infirmities of the minister, and your infirmities, that is, their faults, and your uncharitable censures of their faults, meet together, that may produce this ill effect, that personal matters may be cast upon the ministerial function, and so the faults of a minister be imputed to the ministry; and by such a prejudice, and conceit of one man's ill life, you may lose the taste and comfort of his, and perchance of others' good doctrine too. *All that is covered shall be made manifest*, says Christ; you shall know all their faults, and you shall know them then, when it shall most confound them, and least endanger you, when it shall aggravate their torment, and do you no harm: that is, at the day of judgment. In the mean time, because it might hurt you to know their faults, God hath covered their feet so far, as that he would not have you looking upon their feet, divert you from depending upon their mouths, as long as by his permission they sit in Moses' chair, and execute God's commission. If they employ their middle wings, which were ordained for them to fly withal, if they do their duties in breaking the bread of life, and dispensing the word and sacraments, and assisting the sick in body, and sick in soul, though God have, in part, covered their faces, that is, not imparted to them such gifts, or such an open sight into deep points, as perchance you desire, yet he hath covered their feet too; he hath for your sakes removed their faults from your survey, as you are but private men. Take the benefit of their two middle wings, their willingness to assist you with their

labours, and in their other four wings, be not too curious, too censorious, too severe, either their face-wings, that is, the depth of their learning, or their feet-wings, that is, the holiness of their lives.

They have six wings to these several purposes; and *Singuli senas*, says our text, *Every one of them hath six wings.* For, for the first couple, the face-wings, howsoever some of the ministers of God have gifts above their fellows, howsoever they have gained the names of *Doctores Seraphici*, and *Doctores Illuminati*, (with which titles they abound in the Roman church) yet their faces are in part covered, they must not think they see all, understand all; the learnedest of all hath defects, even in matter of learning. And for the second couple, the feet-wings, howsoever some may make shift for the reputation of being more pure, more sanctified than their fellows, yet the best of them all need a covering for their feet too; all their steps, all their actions will not endure examination. But for the last couple, however there may be some intimation given of a great degree of perfection in matter of knowledge, and in matter of manners, (for in those creatures which are mentioned in the first of Ezekiel (which also signify the ministers of God) there are but four wings spoken of, so that there are no face-wings, they have an abundant measure of learning and knowledge, and the cherubim (which may also signify the same persons) have but two wings, no covering upon face or feet; to denote, that some may be without any remarkable exception in their doctrine, and in their manners too) yet for the last couple, the two middle wings, by which they fly, and address themselves to every particular soul that needs their spiritual assistance, the ministers of God are never in any figure but represented. Better they wanted face-wings, and feet-wings, (discretion to cover either their insufficiency in knowledge, or their infirmity in manners (than that they should want their middle-wings, that is, a disposition to apply themselves to their flock, and to be always ready to distribute the promises of God, and the seals of his promises, the word and sacraments, amongst them. And this may be conveniently intended in their *wings*.

Now as they were *alati*, they were *oculati* in our text; they have *eyes* as well as *wings;* they fly, but they know whither they fly. In the doctrine of implicit obedience in the Roman

church, to believe as the church believes, or as that confessor which understands not what the church believes, makes you believe the church believes, in their doctrine of that which they call Blind Obedience, that is, to pursue and execute any commandment of any superior, without any consideration; in both these there are wings enough, but there are no eyes: they fly from hence to Rome, and Roman jurisdictions, and they fly over hither again, after statutes, after proclamations, after banishments iterated upon them; so that here are wings enow, but they lack those eyes by which they should discern between religion and rebellion, between a traitor and a martyr. And to take our consideration from them, and reflect upon ourselves, they that fly high at matter of mystery, and leave out matter of edification, they that fly over sea for platforms of discipline, and leave out that church that bred them, they that fly close to the service of great men's affections and purposes, and do the work of God coldly, and faintly, they may be *alati*, but they are not *oculati*, they may fly high, and fly fast, and fly far, and fly close in the ways of preferment, but they see not their end; not only not the end that they shall come to, but not the end that they are put upon; not only not their own ends, but not their ends whose instruments they are. Those birds whose eyes are sealed, and sewed up, fly highest; but they are made a prey: God exposes not his servants to such dangers; he gives them wings, that is, means to do their office; but eyes too, that is, discretion and religious wisdom how to do it.

And this is that which they seem to need most, for their wings are limited, but their eyes are not; *Six wings*, but *full of eyes*, says our text. They must have eyes in their tongues; they must see, that they apply not blindly and inconsiderately God's gracious promises to the presumptuous, nor his heavy judgments to the broken-hearted. They must have eyes in their ears; they must see that they hearken neither to a superstitious sense from Rome, nor to a seditious sense of Scriptures from the separation. They must have eyes in their hands; they must see that they touch not upon any such benefits or rewards, as might bind them to any other master than to God himself. They must have eyes in their eyes; spiritual eyes in their bodily eyes; they must see

that they make a charitable construction of such things as they see other men do, and this is that fulness of eyes which our text speaks of.

But then especially, says our text, *They were full of eyes within;* the fulness, the abundance of eyes, that is, of providence and discretion in the ministers of God, was intimated before: in the sixth verse it was said, *That they were full of eyes before and behind:* that is, circumspect and provident for all that were about them, and committed to them. But all is determined and summed up in this, that *They were full of eyes within.* For as there is no profit at all (none to me, none to God) if I get all the world and lose mine own soul, so there is no profit to me, if I win other men's souls to God, and lose mine own. All my wings shall do me no good, all mine eyes before and behind shall do me no good, if I have no prospect inward, no eyes within, no care of my particular and personal safety.

And so we have done with our first general part, the persons denoted in these four creatures, and the duties of their ministry; in which we have therefore insisted thus long, that having so declared and notified to you our duties, you also might be the more willing to hear of your own duties, as well as ours, and to join with us in this open, and incessant, and total profession of your religion, which is the celebration of the Trinity in this acclamation, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which is, which was, and which is to come.*

To come therefore now to the second part, and taking the four evangelists to be principally intended here, but secondarily the preachers of the Gospel too, and not only they, but in a fair extension and accommodation the whole church of God, first we noted their ingenuity and openness in the profession of their religion, they did it *dicentes*, saying, declaring, publishing, manifesting their devotion, without any disguise, any modification.

In that song of the three children in the furnace, *O all ye works of the Lord*, &c., there is nothing presented speechless: to every thing that is there, there is given a tongue; not only all those creatures which have all a being, but even privations, privations that have no being, that are nothing in themselves, (as the *night*, and *darkness*) are there called upon *to bless the Lord, to praise*

*him, and magnify him for ever.* But towards the end of that song, you may see that service drawn into a narrower compass; you may see to whom this speech, and declaration doth principally appertain; for after he had called upon *sun*, and *moon*, and *earth*, and *sea*, and *fowls*, and *fishes*, and *plants*, and *night*, and *darkness, to praise the Lord, to bless him, and magnify him for ever*, then he comes to *O ye children of men, primogeniti Dei*, God's beloved creatures, his eldest sons, and first-born, in his intention; and then, *Domus Israel, O ye house of Israel*, you whom God hath not only made men, but Christian men, not only planted in the world, but in the church, not only endued with reason, but inspired with religion: and then again, *O ye priests of the Lord, O ye servants of the Lord*, those of God's portion, not only in the church, but of the church, and appointed by him to deal between him and other men: and then also, *O ye spirits and souls of the righteous*, those whom those instruments of God had powerfully and effectually wrought upon, upon those especially, those men, those Christian men, those priests, those sanctified men, upon those he calls *to bless the Lord, to praise him, and magnify him for ever.* This obligation the Holy Ghost lays upon us all, that the more God does for us, the more we should declare it to other men; God would have us tell him our sins; God would have us tell other men his mercies; it was no excuse for Moses that he was of *uncircumcised lips*[a]; no excuse for Jeremy to say, *O Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child*[b], *Credidi, propterea locutus sum*, is David's form of argument, *I believed, and therefore I spake.* If thou dost not love to speak of God, and of his benefits, thou dost not believe in God, nor that those benefits came from him.

Remember that when thou wast a child, and presented to God in baptism, God gave thee a tongue in other men's mouths, and enabled thee, by them, to establish a covenant, a contract between thy soul, and him then. And therefore since God spake to thee, when thou couldst not hear him, in the faith of the church; since God heard thee when thou couldst not speak to him, in the mouth of thy sureties; since that God that created thee was *Verbum*, the Word, (for, *Dixit, et facta sunt*, God spake, and all

[a] Exod. v. 12. [b] Jer. i. 6.

things were made) since that God that redeemed thee was *Verbum*, the Word, (for *the Word was made flesh*) since that God that sanctified thee is *Verbum*, the Word, (for therefore St. Basil calls the Holy Ghost *Verbum Dei, quia interpres Filii*, He calls the Holy Ghost the Word of God, because as the Son is the Word, because he manifests the Father unto us, so the Holy Ghost is the Word, because he manifests the Son unto us, and enables us to apprehend, and apply to ourselves, the promises of God in him) since God, in all the three Persons, is *Verbum*, the Word to thee, all of them working upon thee, by speaking to thee, Be thou *Verbum* too, a Word, as God was; a speaking, and a doing word, to his glory, and the edification of others. If the Lord open thy lips, (and except the Lord open them, it were better they were luted with the clay of the grave) let it be to show forth his praise, and not in blasphemous, not in scurrile, not in profane language. If the Lord open thy hand, (and if the Lord open it not, better it were manacled with thy winding-sheet) let it be, as well to distribute his blessings, as to receive them. Let thy mouth, let thy hand, let all the organs of thy body, all the faculties of thy soul, concur in the performance of this duty, intimated here, and required of all God's saints, *Ut dicant*, That they speak, utter, declare, publish the glory of God. For this is that ingenuity, that alacrity, which constitutes our first branch. And then the second is the assiduity, the constancy, the incessantness, *They rest not day nor night.*

But have the saints of God no vacation? Do they never cease? nay, as the word imports, *requiem non habent*, they have no *rest*. Beloved, God himself rested not, till the seventh day; be thou content to stay for thy Sabbath, till thou mayest have an eternal one. If we understand this, of rest merely, of bodily rest, the saints of God are least likely to have it, in this life; for, this life, is to them especially, above others, a business, and a perplexed business, a warfare, and a bloody warfare, a voyage, and a tempestuous voyage. If we understand this rest to be cessation, intermission, the saints in heaven have none of that, in this service. It is a labour that never wearies, to serve God there. As the sun is no wearier now, than when he first set out, six

thousand years since; as that angel, which God hath given to protect thee, is not weary of his office, for all thy perversenesses, so, howsoever God deal with thee, be not thou weary of bearing thy part, in his choir here in the militant church. God will have low voices, as well as high; God will be glorified *de profundis*, as well as *in excelsis;* God will have his tribute of praise, out of our adversity, as well as out of our prosperity. And that is it which is intimated, and especially intended in the phrase which follows, *Day and night.* For, it is not only that those saints of God who have their heaven upon earth, do praise him in the night; according to that of St. Jerome, *Sanctis ipse somnus, oratio;* and that of St. Basil, *Etiam somnia sanctorum preces sunt;* That holy men do praise God, and pray to God in their sleep, and in their dreams; nor only that which David speaks of, of rising in the night, and fixing stationary hours for prayer; but even in the depth of any spiritual night, in the shadow of death, in the midnight of afflictions and tribulations, God brings light out of darkness, and gives his saints occasion of glorifying him, not only in the dark, (though it be dark) but from the dark, (because it is dark.) This is a way inconceivable by any, inexpressible to any, but those that have felt that manner of God's proceeding in themselves, that be the night what night it will, be the oppression of what extension, or of what duration it can, all this retards not their zeal to God's service; nay, they see God better in the dark, than they did in the light; their tribulation hath brought them to a nearer distance to God, and God to a clearer manifestation to them. And so, to their ingenuity, that they profess God, and their religion openly, is added an assiduity, that they do it incessantly; and then also, an integrity, a totality, that they do not depart with, nor modify in any article of their religion; which is entirely, and totally enwrapped in this acclamation of the Trinity, (which is our third, and last branch in this last part) *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

For the Trinity itself, it is *lux*, but *lux inaccessibilis;* it is light, for a child at baptism professes to see it; but then, it is so inaccessible a light, as that if we will make natural reason our

*medium*, to discern it by, it will fall within that of David, *Posuit tenebras latibulum suum*[10], God hath made darkness his secret places; God, as God, will be seen in the creature; there, in the creature he is light; light accessible to our reason; but God, in the Trinity, is open to no other light, than the light of faith. To make representations of men, or of other creatures, we find two ways; statuaries have one way, and painters have another: statuaries do it by subtraction; they take away, they pare off some parts of that stone, or that timber, which they work upon, and then that which they leave, becomes like that man, whom they would represent: painters do it by addition; whereas the cloth, or table presented nothing before, they add colours, and lights, and shadows, and so there arises a representation. Sometimes we represent God by subtraction, by negation, by saying, God is that, which is not mortal, not passible, nor moveable: sometimes we present him by addition; by adding our bodily lineaments to him, and saying, That God hath hands, and feet, and ears, and eyes; and adding our affections, and passions to him, saying, That God is glad, or sorry, angry, or reconciled, as we are. Some such things may be done towards the representing of God, as God; but towards the expressing of the distinction of the Persons in the Trinity, nothing.

Then when Abraham went up to the great sacrifice of his son[11], he left his servants, and his ass below: though our natural reason, and human arts, serve to carry us to the hill, to the entrance of the mysteries of religion, yet to possess us of the hill itself, and to come to such a knowledge of the mysteries of religion, as must save us, we must leave our natural reason, and human arts at the bottom of the hill, and climb up only by the light, and strength of faith. *Dimitte me quia lucescit*, says that angel that wrestled with Jacob; *Let me go, for it grows light*[12]. If thou think to see me by day-light, says that angel, thou wilt be deceived; if we think to see this mystery of the Trinity, by the light of reason, *dimittemus*, we shall lose that hold which we had before, our natural faculties, our reason will be perplexed, and enfeebled, and our supernatural, our faith not strengthened that way.

[10] Psal. xviii. 11. [11] Gen. xxii. 5. [12] Gen. xxxii. 26.

Those testimonies, and proofs of the Trinity, which are in the Old Testament, are many, and powerful in their direct line; but they are truly, for the most part, of that nature, as that they are rather illustrations, and confirmations to him that believed the Trinity before, than arguments of themselves, able to convince him that hath no such pre-conception. We that have been catechized, and brought up in the knowledge of the Trinity, find much strength, and much comfort, in that we find, in the first line of the Bible, that *Bara Elohim, creavit Dii, Gods created heaven and earth;* in this, that there is the name of God in the plural, joined to a verb of the singular number, we apprehend an intimation of divers persons in one God; we that believe the Trinity before, find this, in that phrase, and form of speech; the Jews, which believe not the Trinity, find no such thing. So when we find that plural phrase, *Faciamus hominem*, that God says, *Let us*, us in the plural, *make man*, we are glad to find such a plural manner of expressing God, by the Holy Ghost, as may concur with that, which we believed before; that is, divers persons in one God. To the same purpose also is that of the prophet Esay, where God says, *Whom shall I send, or who shall go for us*[13]? There we discern a singularity, one God, *Whom shall I send?* and a plurality of Persons too, *Who shall go for us?* But what man, that had not been catechised in that doctrine before, would have conceived an opinion, or established a faith in the Trinity, upon those phrases in Moses, or in Esay, without other evidence? Certainly, it was the divine purpose of God, to reserve and keep this mystery of the Trinity, unrevealed for a long time, even from those, who were, generally, to have their light, and instruction from his word; they had the law and the prophets, and yet they had no very clear notions of the Trinity. For, this is evident, that in Trismegistus, and in Zoroaster, and in Plato, and some other authors of that air, there seem to be clearer, and more literal expressings of the Trinity, than are in all the prophets of the Old Testament. We take the reason to be, that God reserved the full manifestation of this mystery, for the dignifying, and glorifying of his Gospel. And therefore it is enough that we know, that they of the Old Testament, were

[13] Isaiah vi. 8

saved by the same faith in the Trinity, that we are; how God wrought that faith in them, amongst whom he had established no outward means for the imprinting of such a faith, let us not too curiously inquire. Let us be content, to receive our light there, where God hath been pleased to give it; that is, in those places of the New Testament, which admit no contradiction, nor disputation. As where Christ says, *Go, and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*[14]. And where it is said, *There are three that bear witness in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one*[15]. There are obumbrations of the Trinity, in nature, and illustrations of the Trinity, in the Old Testament; but the declaration, the manifestation thereof, was reserved for the Gospel.

Now, this place, this text, is in both, it is in the Old, and it is in the New Testament; here, and in Esay; and in both places, agreed by all expositors, to be a confession of the Trinity, in that threefold repetition, *Holy, holy, holy*. Where (by the way) you may have use of this note; that in the first place (in the Prophet Esay) we have a fair intimation, that that use of subalternation in the service of God, of that, which we have called antiphones, and responsaries in the church of God, (when in that service, some things are said or sung by one side of the congregation, and then answered by the other, or said by one man, and then answered by the whole congregation) that this manner of serving God, hath a pattern from the practice of the triumphant church. For there, the *seraphim cried to one another*, or (as it is in the original) *this seraphim to this, Holy, holy, holy;* so that there was a voice given, and an answer made, and a reply returned in this service of God. And as the pattern is in the triumphant church for this holy manner of praising God, so in the practice thereof, the militant prescribes; for it hath been always in use. And therefore, that religious vehemence of Damascene, (speaking of this kind of service in the church in his time) may be allowed us, *Hymnum dicemus, etsi dæmones disrumpantur;* How much soever it anger the devil, or his devilish instruments of schism and sedition, we will serve God in this manner, with holy cheer-

[14] Matt. xxviiii. 19. [15] 1 John v. 7.

fulness, with music, with antiphones, with responsaries, of which we have the pattern from the triumphant, and the practice from the primitive church.

Now as this totality, and integrity of their religion which they profess, first, with an ingenuity (openly) and then, with an assiduity, (incessantly) hath (as it were) this dilatation, this extension of God into three Persons, (which is the character and specification of the Christian religion; for no religion, but the Christian, ever inclined to a plurality of Persons in one God) so hath it also such a contracting of this infinite power into that one God, as could not agree with any other religion than the Christian, in either of those two essential circumstances; first, that that God should be omnipotent, and then, that he should be eternal; *The Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

All the heathen gods were ever subordinate to one another; that which one god could not, or would not do, another would, and could; and this oftentimes, rather to anger another god, than to please the party. And then there was a surveyor, a controller over them all, which none of them could resist, nor entreat, which was their *fatum*, their destiny. And so, in these subsidiary gods, these occasional gods, there could be no omnipotence, no almightiness. Our God is so omnipotent, almighty so, as that his power hath no limitation but his own will. *Nihil impossibile nisi quod non vult*[16], He can do whatsoever he will do; and he can do more than that; for he could have raised sons to Abraham, out of stones in the street.

And as their gods were not omnipotent, so neither were they eternal. They knew the history, the generation, the pedigree of all their gods; they knew where they were born, and where they went to school, (as Justin Martyr says, That Esculapius, and Apollo their gods of physic, learned their physic of Chiron; so that the scholars were gods, and their masters none) and they knew where their gods were buried; they knew their parents, and their uncles, their wives and their children, yea their bastards, and their concubines; so far were they from being eternal gods; but if we remit and slacken this consideration of eternity (which is never to have had beginning) and consider

[16] Tertullian.

only perpetuity (which is never to have end) these gods were not capable of a perpetual honour, an honour that should never end. For we see that of those three hundred several Jupiters, which were worshipped in the world, before Christ came, though the world abound at this day with idolatry, yet there is not one of those idols, not one of those three hundred Jupiters celebrated with any solemnity, no, not known in any obscure corner of the world. They were mortal before they were gods; they are dead in their persons: and they were mortal when they were gods; they are dead in their worship. In respect of eternity (which is necessary in a god) perpetuity is but *Mobilis imago* (as Plato calls it) A faint and transitory shadow of eternity; and Pindarus makes it less; *Idolum æternitatis;* Perpetuity is but an idol compared to eternity; and, *An idol is nothing*, says the apostle. Our souls have a blessed perpetuity, our souls shall no more see an end, than God, that hath no beginning; and yet our souls are very far from being eternal. But those gods are so far from being eternal, as that, considered as gods (that is, celebrated with divine worship) they are not perpetual. But *God is our God for ever and ever*[17]; ever, without beginning; and ever, without end. *My days are like a shadow that fadeth, and I am withered like grass; but thou O Lord dost remain for ever, and thy remembrance from generation to generation*[18]; it is a *remaining*, and it is a *remembrance;* which words denote a former being. So that God, and our God, only he, is eternal.

To conclude all, with that which must be the conclusion of all at last, this eternity of our God is expressed here in a phrase which designs and presents the last judgment, that is, *which was, and is, and is to come.* For though it be *qui fuit, which was*, and *qui est, which is*, yet it is not *qui futurus, which is to be;* but *qui venturus, which is to come;* that is, to come to judgment; as it is in divers other places of this Book, *qui venturus, which is to come.* For though the last judiciary power, the final judgment of the world, be to be executed by Christ, as he is the Son of man, visibly apparently in that nature, yet Christ is therein as a delegate of the Trinity; it is in the virtue and power of that commission, *Data est mihi omnis potestas;* He hath all power,

[17] Psal. xlviii. 14. [18] Psal. cii. 11.

but that power that he hath as the Son of man, is given him. For, as the creation of the world was, so the judgment of the world shall be the act of the whole Trinity. For if we consider the second Person in the Trinity, in both his natures, as he redeemed us, God and man, so it cannot be said of him, that *He was;* that is, that he was eternally; for there was a time, when that God was not that man; when that Person, Christ, was not constituted. And therefore this word, in our text, *Which was*, (which is also true of the rest) is not appropriated to Christ, but intended of the whole Trinity. So that it is the whole Trinity that is to come, to come to judgment.

And therefore, let us reverently embrace such provisions, and such assistances as the church of God hath ordained, for retaining and celebrating the Trinity, in this particular contemplation, as they are to come to judgment. And let us at least provide so far, to stand upright in that judgment, as not to deny, nor to dispute the power, or the Persons of those Judges. A man may make a petty larceny high treason so; if being called in question for that lesser offence, he will deny that there is any such power, any such sovereign, any such king, as can call him in question for it, he may turn his whipping into a quartering. At that last judgment, we shall be arraigned for not clothing, not visiting, not harbouring the poor; for our not giving is a taking away; our withholding is a withdrawing; our keeping to ourselves, is a stealing from them. But yet all this is but a petty larceny, in respect of that high treason of infidelity, of denying or doubting of the distinct Persons of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity. To believe in God, one great, one universal, one infinite power, does but distinguish us from beasts; for there are no men that do not acknowledge such a power, or that do not believe in it, if they acknowledge it: even they that acknowledge the devil to be God, believe in the devil. But that which distinguishes man from man, that which only makes his immortality a blessing, (for even immortality is part of their damnation that are damned, because it were an ease, it were a kind of pardon to them to be mortal, to be capable of death, though after millions of generations) is, to conceive aright of the power of the Father, of the wisdom of the Son, of the goodness of the Holy Ghost; of the

mercy of the Father, of the merits of the Son, of the application of the Holy Ghost; of the creation of the Father, of the redemption of the Son, of the sanctification of the Holy Ghost. Without this, all notions of God are but confused, all worship of God is but idolatry, all confession of God is but atheism; for so the apostle argues, *When you were without Christ, you were without God.* Without this, all moral virtues are but diseases; liberality is but a popular bait, and not a benefit, not an alms; chastity is but a castration, and an impotency, not a temperance, not mortification; active valour is but a fury, whatsoever we do, and passive valour is but a stupidity, whatsoever we suffer. Natural apprehensions of God, though those natural apprehensions may have much subtilty, voluntary elections of a religion, though those voluntary elections may have much singularity, moral directions for life, though those moral directions may have much severity, are all frivolous and lost, if all determine not in Christianity, in the notion of God, so as God hath manifested and conveyed himself to us; in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, whom this day we celebrate, in the ingenuity, and in the assiduity, and in the totality, recommended in this text, and in this acclamation of the text, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

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## SERMON XLIII.

### *PREACHED UPON ALL-SAINTS' DAY.*

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APOCALYPSE vii. 2, 3.

And I saw another angel ascending from the East, which had the seal of the living God, and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom power was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying, Hurt ye not the earth, neither the sea, neither the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

THE solemnity and festival with which the sons of the catholic church of God celebrate this day, is much mistaken, even by them who think themselves the only catholics, and celebrate this

day, with a devotion, at least near to superstition in the church of Rome. For they take it (for the most part) to be a festival instituted by the church, in contemplation of the saints in heaven only; and so carry and employ all their devotions this day, upon consideration of those saints, and invocation of them only. But the institution of this day had this occasion. The heathen Romans, who could not possibly house all their gods in several temples, they were so over-many, according to their law, *Deos frugi colunto*, To serve God as cheap as they could, made one temple for them all, which they called *Pantheon*, To all the gods. This temple Boniface the pope begged of the Emperor Phocas; (and yet, by the way, this was some hundreds of years after the donation of the Emperor Constantine, by which the bishops of Rome pretend all that to be theirs; surely they could not find this patent, this record, this donation of Constantine, then when Boniface begged this temple in Rome, this *pantheon* of the emperor) and this temple, formerly the temple of all their gods, that bishop consecrated to the honour of all the martyrs, *of all* the saints of that kind. But after him, another bishop of the same see, enlarged the consecration, and accompanied it with this festival, which we celebrate to-day, in honour of the Trinity, and angels, and apostles, and martyrs, and confessors, and saints, and all the elect children of God. So that it is truly a festival, grounded upon that article of the Creed, *The communion of saints*, and unites in our devout contemplation, the Head of the church, God himself, and those two noble constitutive parts thereof, the triumphant, and the militant. And, accordingly, hath the church applied this part of Scripture, to be read for the Epistle of this day, to show, that *All-Saints' day* hath relation to all saints, both living and dead; for those *servants of God*, which are here in this text, *sealed in their foreheads*, are such (without all question) as receive that *seal* here, here in the militant church. And therefore, as these words, so this festival, in their intendment, that applied these words to this festival, is also of saints upon earth.

This day being then the day of the communion of saints, and this Scripture being received for the epistle of this universal day, that exposition will best befit it, which makes it most universal. And

therefore, with very good authority, such as the expositions of this book of the *Revelation* can receive, (of which book, no man will undertake to the Church, that he hath found the certain, and the literal sense as yet, nor is sure to do it, till the prophecies of this book be accomplished, for *Prophetiæ ingenium, ut in obscuro delitescat, donec impleatur*[1], It is the nature of prophecy to be secret, till it be fulfilled, and therefore *Daniel* was bid *to shut up the words, and to seal the book even to the time of the end*[2], that is, to the end of the prophecy) with good authority, I say, we take that number of *the servants of God*, which are said to be *sealed* in the fourth verse of this chapter, which is *one hundred forty-four thousand*, and that *multitude which none could number, of all nations*, which are mentioned in the ninth verse, to be intended of one and the same company; both these expressions denote the same persons. In the fourth verse of the fourteenth chapter, this number of *one hundred forty-four thousand* is applied to *virgins*, but is intended of all God's saints; for every holy soul is a virgin. And then this name of *Israel*, which is mentioned in the fourth verse of this chapter, (*That there were so many sealed of the house of Israel*) is often in Scripture applied to spiritual Israelites, to believers, (for every faithful soul is an Israelite) so that this number of *one hundred forty-four thousand virgins*, and *one hundred forty-four thousand Israelites*, which is not a certain number, but a number expressing a numberless multitude, this number, and that numberless multitude spoken of after, of all nations, which none could number, is all one; and both making up the great and glorious body of all saints, import and present thus much in general, That howsoever God inflict great and heavy calamities in this world, to the shaking of the best moral and Christianly constancies and consciences, yet all his saints, being eternally known by him, shall be sealed by him, that is, so assured of his assistance, by a good using of those helps which he shall afford them, in the Christian Church, intended in this sealing on the forehead, that those afflictions shall never separate them from him, nor frustrate his determination, nor disappoint his gracious purpose upon them, all them, this multitude, which no man could number.

[1] Irenæus. [2] Dan. xii. 4.

To come then to the words themselves, we see the safety, and protection of the saints of God, and his children, in the person and proceeding of our protector, in that it is in the hands of an angel, (*I saw another angel*) and an angel of that place, that came from the east; the east that is the fountain of all light and glory, (*I saw another angel come from the east*) and as the word doth naturally signify, (and is so rendered in this last translation) *ascending from the east*, that is, growing and increasing in strength; after that we shall consider our assurance in the commission and power of this angel, *he had the seal of the living God;* and then in the execution of this commission; in which we shall see first, who our enemies were; they were also angels, (*this angel cried to other angels*) able to do much by nature, because angels; then we shall see their number, they were four angels, made stronger by joining (*this angel cried to those four angels*). And besides their malignant nature, and united concord, two shrewd disadvantages, mischievous and many, they had a power, a particular, an extraordinary power given them, at that time, to do hurt (*four angels, to whom power was given to hurt*) and to do general, universal hurt, (*power to hurt the earth, and the sea*). After all this we shall see this protector, against these enemies, and their commission, execute his, first by declaring and publishing it, (*he cried with a loud voice*) and then lastly, what his commission was; it was, to stay those four angels, for all their commission, *from hurting the earth, and the sea, and the trees.* But yet, this is not for ever; it is but *till the servants of God were sealed in the forehead;* that is, till God had afforded them such helps, as that by a good use of them they might subsist; which if they did not, for all their sealing in the forehead, this angel will deliver them over to the other four destroying angels. Of which sealing, that is, conferring of grace and helps against those spiritual enemies, there is a pregnant intimation, that it is done by the benefit of the Church, and in the power of the Church, which is no singular person, in that, upon the sudden, the person and the number is varied in our text; and this angel, which when he is said to *ascend from the east, and to cry with a loud voice*, is still a singular angel, one angel, yet when he comes to the act of *sealing in the forehead*, to the dispensing of sacra-

ments, and sacramental assistances, he does that as a plural person, he represents more, the whole Church, and therefore says here, Stay, hurt nothing, *till we*, we *have sealed the servants of our*, our *God in their foreheads*. And by all these steps must we pass through this garden of flowers, this orchard of fruits, this abundant text.

First then, man being compassed with a cloud of witnesses of his own infirmities, and the manifold afflictions of this life, (for, *Dies diei eructat verbum*, *Day unto day uttereth the same, and night unto night teacheth knowledge*[3], the bells tell him in the night, and fame tells him in the day, that he himself melts and drops away piece-meal in the departing of parents, and wife, and children out of this world, yea he hears daily of a worse departing, he hears of the defection, and backsliding of some of his particular acquaintance in matter of religion, or of their stiffness and obduration in some course of sin, which is the worse consumption, *Dies diei eructat*, every day makes him learneder than other in this sad knowledge, and he knows withal, *Quod cuiquam accidere potest, cuivis potest*, that any of their cases may be his case too) man that is compassed with such a cloud of such witnesses, had need of some light to show him the right way, and some strength to enable him to walk safely in it. And this light and strength is here proposed in the assistance of an angel. Which being first understood of angels in general, affords a great measure of comfort to us, because the angels are *seduli animæ pedissequæ*[4], faithful and diligent attendants upon all our steps. They do so, they do attend the service and good of man, because it is *illorum optimum*, it is the best thing that angels (as angels) can do, to do so: For evermore it is best for everything to do that for which it was ordained and made; and they were made angels for the service and assistance of man. *Unum tui et angeli optimum est;* Man and angels have one and the same thing in them, which is better than anything else that they have; nothing hath it but they, and both they have it. *Deus nihil sui optimum habet; unum optimum totus;* It is not so with God; God hath nothing in him that is best; but he is altogether one entire best. But man and angels

[3] Psal. xix. 2. [4] Bernard.

have one thing common to them both, which is the best thing that naturally either of them hath, that is, reason, understanding, knowledge, discourse, consideration. Angels and men have grace too, that is infinitely better than their reason; but though grace be the principal in the nature and dignity thereof, yet it is but accessory to an angel, or to man; grace is not in their nature at first, but infused by God, not to make them angels and men, but to make them good angels, and good men. This very reason then, which is *Illorum optimum*, The best thing that angels, as angels, naturally have, teaches them, that the best thing that they can do, is the performance of that for which they were made. And then howsoever they were made spirits for a more glorious use, to stand in the presence of God, and to enjoy the fulness of that contemplation, yet he made his spirits angels, for the love which he had to be with the sons of men. *Sufficit illis, et pro magno habeant*[5], Let this content the angels, and let them magnify God for this, *Quod cum spiritus sint conditione, ex gratia facti sunt angeli*, That whereas by nature they are but spirits, (and the devil is so) by favour and by office they are made angels, messengers from God to man.

Now as the angels are not defective in their best part, their reason, and therefore do their office in assisting us, so also let us exalt our best part, our reason too, to reverence them with a care of doing such actions only as might not be unfit for their presence. Both angels and we have the image of God imprinted in us; the angels have it not *in summo*, though they have it *in tuto;* They have it not in the highest degree, (for so Christ only is *the image of the invisible God*[6]) but they have it in a deep impression, so as they can neither lose it, nor deface it. We have this image of God so as that we cannot lose it, but we may, and do deface it; *Uri potest, non exuri*[7]*;* The devil hath this image in him, and it cannot be burnt out in hell; for it is imprinted in the very natural faculties of the soul. But if we consider how many waters beat upon us in this world to wash off this image, how many rusty and habitual sins gnaw upon us, to eat out this image, how many files pass over our souls in cala-

[5] Bernard. [6] Colos. i. 15. [7] Bernard.

mities, and afflictions, in which though God have a purpose, *Resculpere imaginem*[8], to re-engrave, to refresh, to polish this image in us, by those corrections, yet the devil hath a harsh file too, that works a murmuring, a comparing of our sins with other men's sins, and our punishments with other men's punishments, and at last, either denying of Providence; that things so unequally carried cannot be governed by God, or a wilful renouncing of it in desperation, that his Providence cannot be resisted, and therefore it is all one what we do, if we consider this, we had need look for assistants.

Let us therefore look first to that which is best in us naturally, that is, reason; for if we lose that, our reason, our discourse, our consideration, and sink into an incapable and barren stupidity, there is no footing, no subsistence for grace. All the virtue of corn is in the seed; but that will not grow in water, but only in the earth: all the good of man, considered supernaturally, is in grace; but that will not grow in a washy soul, in a liquid, in a watery, and dissolute, and scattered man. Grace grows in reason; in that man, and in that mind, that considers the great treasure, what it is to have the image of God in him, naturally; for even that is our earnest of supernatural perfection. And this image of God, even in the angels, being reason, and the best act of rectified reason, the doing of that for which they were made, it is that which the angels are naturally inclined to do, to be always present for the assistance of man; for therefore they are angels. And since they have a joy at the conversion of a sinner, and everything affects joy, and therefore they endeavour our conversion, yea, since they have an increase of their knowledge by being about us, (for, St. Paul says, *That he was made a preacher of the Gospel, to the intent that angels might know, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God*[9]) and everything affects knowledge, these saints of God upon earth, intended in our text, might justly promise themselves a strong and a blessed comfort, and a happy issue in all tribulations, by this Scripture, if there were no more intended in it, but only the assistance of angels; *I saw an angel.*

But our security of deliverance is in a safer, and a stronger

[8] Augustine. [9] Eph. iii. 10.

hand than this; not in these ministerial, and missive angels only; but in his that sends them, yea, in his that made them; *By whom, and for whom, they, and the thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, and all things were created, and in whom they consist*[10]. For, as the name of angel is attributed to Christ, *Angelus Testamenti, the angel of the covenant*[11]; and many of those miraculous passages in the deliverances of Israel out of Egypt, which were done by the second Person in the Trinity, by Christ, in *Exodus*, are by Moses there, and in the abridgment of that story by Stephen, after[12], attributed to *angels*, so in this text, this *angel*, which doth so much for God's saints, is, not inconveniently, by many expositors, taken to be our Saviour Christ himself. And will any man doubt of performance of conditions in him? will any man look for better security than him, who puts two, and two such into the band, *Christ*, and *Jesus;* an anointed king, able, an actual Saviour, willing to discharge, not his, but our debt? He is a double person, God and man; He engages a double pawn, the Old, and the New Testament, the law, and the Gospel; and you may be bold to trust him, that hath paid so well before; since you see a performance of the prophecies of the Old Testament, in the free and glorious preaching of the Gospel, trust also in a performance of the promises of the Gospel, in timely deliverances in this life, and an infallible, and eternal reposedness, in the life to come. He took our nature, that he might know our infirmities experimentally; he brought down a better nature, that he might recover us, restore us powerfully, effectually; and that he might be sure to accomplish his work, he brought more to our reparation, than to our first building, the Godhead wrought as much in our redemption, as in our creation, and the manhood more; for it began but then. And to take from us all doubt of his power, or of his will in our deliverance, he hath taken the surest way of giving satisfaction, he hath payed beforehand; *Verè tulit, He hath truly borne all our infirmities*[13], He hath, already; *And with his stripes are we healed;* we that are here now, are healed by his stripes received sixteen hundred years since. Nay, he was *Occisus ab*

[10] Col. i. 16, 17. [11] Mal. iii. 1.
[12] Acts vii. [13] Isaiah liii. 4.

*origine, The Lamb slain from the beginning of the world*[14]; That day that the frame of the world was fully set up in the making of man, that day that the fairest piece of that frame fell down again, in the fall of *Adam*, that day that God repaired this ruin again, in the promise of a Messias, (all which we take ordinarily to have fallen in one day, the sixth day) that day, in that promise, was this Lamb slain, and all the debts not only of our forefathers, and ours, but of the last man, that shall be found alive at the last day, were then paid, so long beforehand.

This security then, for our deliverance and protection, we have in this angel in our text, (*I saw an angel*) as this angel is Christ; but yet we have also another security, more immediate, and more applicable to us. As men that lend money in the course of the world, have a desire to have a servant in the band with the master, not that they hope for the money from him, but that they know better how to call upon him, and how to take hold of him: so besides this general assistance of angels, and besides this all-sufficiency of the angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, we have, for our security, in this text, (*I saw an angel*) the servants of Christ too; this angel is the minister of his word, the administerer of his sacraments, the mediator between Christ and man, he is this angel, as St. John, so often in the *Revelation*, and the Holy Ghost in other places of Scripture, styles them; this angel is indeed, the whole frame, and hierarchy of the Christian Church. For though this angel be called in this text *The Angel*, in the singular, yet, (to make use of one note by anticipation now, though in our distribution of the branches, we reserved it to the end, because it fits properly our present consideration) though this angel be named in the singular, and so may seem to be restrained to Christ alone, yet we see, the office, when it comes to execution after, is diffused, and there are more in the commission; for those phrases, that *we*, we may seal, the servants of *our*, our God, have a plurality in them, a consent, a harmony, and imply a congregation, and do better agree with the ministry of the Church, than with the person of Christ alone.

So then, to let go none of our assistants, our sureties, our safety

[14] Apoc. xiii. 8.

is in the Angel of the Covenant, Christ Jesus, radically, fundamentally, meritoriously; it is in the ministry of the angels of heaven invisibly; but it is in the Church of God, and in the power of his ministers there, manifestly, sensibly, discernibly; *They should seek the law at the priest's mouth*[15], (they should, and therefore they are to blame that do not, but fly to private expositions). But why should they? *Quia angelus domini exercituum*, (as it follows there) *Because the priest is the angel of the Lord of Hosts.* Yea, the Gospel which they preach, is above all messages, which an angel can bring of himself: *If an angel from heaven preach otherwise unto you, than we have preached, let him be accursed*[16]. The ministry of celestial angels is inferior to the ministry of the ecclesiastical; the Gospel (which belongs to us) is truly *evangelium*, the good ministry of good angels, the best ministry of the best angels; for though we compare not with those angels in nature, we compare with them in office; though our offices tend to the same end (to draw you to God) yet they differ in the way; and though the service of those angels, enlighten your understanding, and assist your belief too, yet in the ministry of these angels in the church, there is a blessed fulfilling, and verification of those words, *Now is salvation nearer, than when we believed*[17]. You believe, because those celestial angels have wrought invisibly upon you, and dispersed your clouds, and removed impediments. You believe, because the great angel Christ Jesus, hath left his history, his action, and passion written for you; and that is a historical faith. But yet salvation is nearer to you, in having all this applied to you, by them, who are like you, men, and there, where you know how to fetch it, the church; that as you believe by reading the Gospels at home, that Christ died for the world, so you may believe, by hearing here, that he died for you. This is God's plenteous redemption, *Quod linguam meam assumsit in opus suum*[18]; That having so great a work to do, as the salvation of souls, he would make use of my tongue; and being to save the world by his word, that I should speak that word. *Docendo vos, quod per se facilius et suavius posset*, That he calls me up hither, to teach you that which he

[15] Mal. ii. 7. [16] Gal. i. 8.
[17] Rom. xiii. 11. [18] Bernard.

could teach you better, and sooner, at home, by his Spirit; *Indulgentia ejus est, non indigentia*, It is the largeness of his mercy towards you, not any narrowness in his power that he needs me. And so have you this angel in our text, in all the acceptations, in which our expositors have delivered him: it is Christ, it is the angels of heaven, it is the ministry of the Gospel; and this angel, whosoever, whatsoever, St. John saw come from the East, (*I saw an angel come from the East*) which was our second branch, and falls next into consideration.

This addition is intended for a particular addition to our comfort; it is a particular endowment, or enlargement of strength and power in this angel, *that he comes from the East.* If we take it, (to go the same way that we went before) first of natural angels, even the western angels, *Qui habuere occasum*, Those angels which have had their sunset, their fall, they came from the East too; *Quomodo cecidisti de cœlo, Lucifer filius orientis! How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, the son of the morning*[19]*!* He had his begetting, his creation in the East, in the light, and there might have stayed, for any necessity of falling, that God laid upon him. Take the angel of the text to be the angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, and his name is the East; he cannot be known, he cannot be said to have any west. *Ecce vir, Oriens nomen ejus*, (so the vulgate reads that place) *Behold the Man, whose name is the East*[20]*;* you can call him nothing else; for so, the other Zachary, the Zachary of the New Testament calls him too, *Per viscera misericordiæ, Through the tender bowels of his mercy, Visitavit nos Oriens, The East, the dayspring from on high hath visited us*[21]*;* and he was derived *à Patre luminum*, He came from the East, begotten from all eternity of the Father of lights, *I came out from the Father, and came into the world*[22]. Take this angel to be the preacher of the Gospel, literally, really, the Gospel came out of the East, where Christ lived and died; and typically, figuratively, Paradise, which also figured the place, to which the Gospel is to carry us, heaven, that also was planted in the East; and therefore St. Basil assigns that for the reason, why in the church service we turn to the East

[19] Isaiah xiv. 12. [20] Zech. vi. 12.
[21] Luke i. 78. [22] John xvi. 28.

when we pray, *Quia antiquam requirimus patriam*, We look towards our ancient country, where the Gospel of our salvation was literally acted, and accomplished, and where heaven, the end of the Gospel, was represented in Paradise. Every way the Gospel is an angel of the East.

But this is that which we take to be principally intended in it, that as the East is the fountain of light, so all our illumination is to be taken from the Gospel. Spread we this a little thinner, and we shall better see through it. If the calamities of the world, or the heavy consideration of thine own sins, have benumbed and benighted thy soul in the vale of darkness, and in the shadow of death; if thou think to wrestle and bustle through these strong storms, and thick clouds, with a strong hand; if thou think thy money, thy bribes shall conjure thee up stronger spirits than those that oppose thee; if thou seek ease in thy calamities, that way to shake and shipwreck thine enemies; in these cross winds, in these countermines, (to oppress as thou art oppressed) all this is but a turning to the north, to blow away and scatter these sadnesses, with a false, an illusory, and a sinful comfort. If thou think to ease thyself in the contemplation of thine honour, thine offices, thy favour, thy riches, thy health, this is but a turning to the south, the sunshine of worldly prosperity. If thou sink under thy afflictions, and canst not find nourishment, but poison, in God's corrections, nor justice, but cruelty, in his judgments, nor mercy, but slackness, in his forbearance till now; if thou suffer thy soul to set in a cloud, a dark cloud of ignorance of God's providence and proceedings, or in a darker, of diffidence of his performance towards thee, this is a turning to the west, and all these are perverse and awry. But turn to the East, and to the angel that comes from thence, the ministry of the Gospel of Christ Jesus in his church; it is true, thou mayest find some dark places in the Scriptures; and, *Est silentii species obscuritas*[23], To speak darkly and obscurely is a kind of silence, I were as good not be spoken to, as not be made to understand that which is spoken, yet fix thyself upon this angel of the East, the preaching of the Word, the ordinance of God, and thine understanding shall be enlightened, and thy belief established, and thy conscience thus

[23] Basil.

far unburdened, that though the sins which thou hast done, cannot be undone, yet neither shalt thou be undone by them; there, where thou art afraid of them, in judgment, they shall never meet thee; but as in the round frame of the world, the farthest West is East, where the West ends, the East begins, so in thee, (who art a world too) thy West and thy East shall join, and when thy sun, thy soul comes to set in thy death-bed, the Sun of Grace shall suck it up into glory.

Our angel comes from the East, (a denotation of splendour, and illustration of understanding, and conscience) and there is more, he comes ascending, (*I saw an angel ascend from the East*) that is, still growing more clear, and more powerful upon us. Take the angel here of natural angels; and then, when the witch of Endor (though an evil spirit appeared to her) yet saw him appear so, ascending, she attributes that glory to it, *I see gods ascending out of the earth*[24]. Take the angel to be Christ, and then, his ascension was *Felix clausula totius itinerarii*[25], The glorious shutting up of all his progress; and though his descending from heaven to earth, and his descending from earth to hell gave us our title, his ascending, by which he carried up our flesh to the right hand of his Father, gave us our possession; his descent, his humiliation gave us *jus ad rem*, but his ascension *jus in re*. But as this angel is the ministry of the Gospel, God gave it a glorious ascent in the primitive church, when as this sun *Exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam*[26], ascended quickly beyond the reach of heretics' wits, and persecutors' swords, and as glorious an ascent in the Reformation, when in no long time, the number of them that had forsaken Rome, was as great as of them that stayed with her.

Now to give way to this ascent of this angel in thyself, make the way smooth, and make thy soul supple; find thou a growth of the Gospel in thy faith, and let us find it in thy life. It is not in thy power to say to this angel, as Joshua said to the sun, *Siste, stand still*[27]; it will not stand still; if thou find it not ascending, it descends; if thy comforts in the Gospel of Christ Jesus grow not, they decay; if thou profit not by the Gospel, thou losest by

[24] 1 Sam. xxviii. 13.
[25] Bernard.
[26] Psal. xix. 6.
[27] Josh. x. 12.

it; if thou live not by it, (nothing can redeem thee) thou diest by it. We speak of going up and down a stair; it is all one stair; of going to, and from the city; it is all one way; of coming in, and going out of a house; it is all one door: so is there *a savour of life unto life*, and *a savour of death unto death* in the Gospel; but it is all one Gospel. If this angel of the East have appeared unto thee, (the light of the Gospel have shined upon thee) and it have not ascended in thee, if it have not made thee wiser and wiser, and better and better too, thou hast stopped that light, vexed, grieved, quenched that spirit; for the natural progress of this angel of the East is to ascend; the natural motion and working of the Gospel is, to make thee more and more confident in God's deliverance, less and less subject to rely upon the weak helps, and miserable comforts of this world. To this purpose this angel ascends, that is, proceeds in the manifestation of his power, and of his readiness to succour us. Of his power in this, that he hath the seals of the living God; *I saw an angel ascending from the East, which had the seal of the living God;* which is our next consideration.

*Of the living God.* The gods of the nations are all dead gods; either such gods as never had life, (stones, and gold and silver) or such gods at best, as were never gods till they were dead; for men that had benefited the world, in any public and general invention, or otherwise, were made gods after their deaths; which was a miserable deification, a miserable godhead that grew out of corruption, a miserable eternity that begun at all, but especially that begun in death; and they were not gods till they died. But our angel had the seal of the living God, that is, power to give life to others. Now, if we seek for this seal in the natural angels, they have it not; for this seal is some visible thing whereby we are assisted to salvation, and the angels have no such. They are made keepers of this seal sometimes, but permanently they have it not. This seal of comfort was put into an angel's hand, when he was *to set a mark upon the foreheads of all them that mourned*[28]; he had a visible thing, *ink*, to mark them withal. But it was not said to him, *Vade et signa omnes creaturas*, Go, and set this mark upon every creature, as it was to the minister of the Gospel,

[28] Ezek. ix. 4.

*Go, and preach to every creature*[29]. If we seek this seal in the great angel, the angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus: it is true he hath it, for, *Omnis potestas data, All power is given unto me, in heaven, and in earth*[30]; and, *Omne judicium, The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son*[31]; Christ, as the Son of man, executes a judgment, and hath a power, which he hath not but by gift, by commission, by virtue of this seal, from his Father. But, because it is not only so in him, that he hath the seal of the living God, but he is this seal himself, (*He is the image of the invisible God*[32]; *he is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person*[33],) it is not only his commission that is sealed, but his nature, he himself is sealed, (*Him hath God the Father sealed*[34],) since, I say, natural angels though they have sometimes this seal, they have it not always, they have not a commission from God, to apply his mercies to man, by any ordinary and visible means, since the angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, hath it, but hath it so, as that he is it too, the third sort of angels, the church-angels, the ministers of the Gospel, are they, who most properly can be said to have this seal by a fixed and permanent possession, and a power to apply it to particular men, in all emergent necessities, according to the institution of that living God, whose seal it is.

Now the great power which is given by God, in giving this seal to these angels, hath a lively representation (such as a shadow can give) in the history of Joseph. Pharaoh says to him, *Thou shalt be over my house, and over all the land of Egypt*[35], (steward of the king's house, and steward of the kingdom) *And at thy word shall all my people be armed*, (constable and marshal too) and to invest him in all these, and more, Pharaoh gave him his *ring*, his seal; not his seal only to those several patents to himself, but the keeping of that seal for the good of others; this temporal seal of Pharaoh was a representation of the seal of the living God. But there is a more express type of it in Exodus; *Thou shalt grave* (says God to Moses[36]) *upon a plate of pure gold as signets are graved, holiness to the Lord; and it shall be upon the*

[29] Mark xvi. 15. [30] Matt. xxviii. 18. [31] John v. 22.
[32] Coloss. i. 15. [33] Heb. i. 3. [34] John vi. 27
[35] Gen. xli. 40. [36] Exod. xxviii. 36.

*forehead of Aaron;* what to do? *That the people may be accepted of him.* There must be a holiness to the Lord, and that presented by Aaron the priest to God, that the people may be *acceptable to the Lord;* so that this seal of the living God, in these angels of our text, is, the sacraments of the New Testament, and the absolution of sins, by which (when God's people come to a holiness to the Lord, in a true repentance, and that that holiness, that is, that repentance, is made known to Aaron, to the priest, and he presents it to the Lord) that priest, his minister seals to them, in those his ordinances, God's acceptation of this degree of holiness, he seals this reconciliation between God and his people. And a contract of future concurrence, with his subsequent grace. This is the power given by God to this ascending angel; and we extend that no further, but hasten to his haste, his readiness to succour us; in which, we proposed for the first consideration, that this angel of light manifested and discovered to us, who our enemies were: (*He cried out* to them who were ready to do mischief, *with a loud voice*) so that we might hear him, and know them.

Though in all court cases it be not good to take knowledge of enemies, (many times that is better forborne) yet in all cases, it is good to know them. Especially in our case in the text, because our enemies intended here, are of themselves, *princes of darkness*[37]; they can multiply clouds, and disguisings, their kingdom is in the darkness, *Sagittant in obscuro, They shoot in the dark*[38], (I am wounded with a temptation, as with the plague, and I know not whence the arrow came) *Collocavit me in obscuris, The enemy hath made my dwelling darkness*[39], I have no window that lets in light, but then this angel of light shows me who they are.

But then, if we were left to ourselves, it were but a little advantage to know who our enemies were, when we knew those enemies to be angels, persons so far above our resistance. For, but that St. Paul mollifies and eases it with a milder word, *Est nobis colluctatio*[40], That we *wrestle* with enemies, (that thereby we might see our danger is but to take a fall, not a deadly wound, if we look seriously to our work; we cannot avoid falling into

[37] Eph. vi. 12. [38] Psal. xi. 2.
[39] Psal. cxliii. 3. [40] Eph. vi. 12.

sins of infirmity, but the death of habitual sin we may: *Quare moriemini domus Israel?* He does not say, why would ye fall? but *why will ye die, ye house of Israel?*) it were a consideration enough to make us desperate of victory, to hear him say, that this (though it be but a wrestling) is *not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places.* None of us hath got the victory over flesh and blood, and yet we have greater enemies than flesh and blood are. Some disciplines, some mortifications we have against flesh and blood; we have St. Paul's *probatum est*, his medicine, (if we will use it) *Castigo corpus, I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*[41]; for that we have some assistance; even our enemies become our friends; poverty or sickness will fight for us against flesh and blood, against our carnal lusts; but for these powers and principalities, I know not where to watch them, how to encounter them. I pass my time sociably and merrily in cheerful conversation, in music, in feasting, in comedies, in wantonness; and I never hear all this while of any power or principality, my conscience spies no such enemy in all this. And then alone, between God and me at midnight, some beam of his grace shines out upon me, and by that light I see this prince of darkness, and then I find that I have been the subject, the slave of these powers and principalities, when I thought not of them. Well, I see them, and I try then to dispossess myself of them, and I make my recourse to the powerfullest exorcism that is, I turn to hearty and earnest prayer to God, and I fix my thoughts strongly (as I think) upon him, and before I have perfected one petition, one period of my prayer, a power and principality is got into me again. *Spiritus soporis*[42], The spirit of slumber closes mine eyes, and I pray drowsily; or *spiritus vertiginis*[43], The spirit of deviation, and vain repetition, and I pray giddily, and circularly, and return again and again to that I have said before, and perceive not that I do so; and *nescio cujus spiritus sim*[44], (as our Saviour said, rebuking his disciples, who were so vehement for the burning of the Samaritans, *you know not of what spirit you are*) I pray, and know not of what spirit I am, I consider not mine

[41] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[42] Isaiah xxix. 10.
[43] Isaiah xix. 14.
[44] Luke ix. 55.

own purpose in prayer; and by this advantage, this door of inconsideration, enters *spiritus erroris*[45], The seducing spirit, the spirit of error, and I pray not only negligently, but erroneously, dangerously, for such things as disconduce to the glory of God, and my true happiness, if they were granted. Nay, even the prophet Hosea's *spiritus fornicationum*[46], enters into me, *The spirit of fornication*, that is, some remembrance of the wantonness of my youth, some misinterpretation of a word in my prayer, that may bear an ill-sense, some unclean spirit, some power or principality hath depraved my prayer, and slackened my zeal. And this is my greatest misery of all, that when that which fights for me, and fights against me too, sickness, hath laid me upon my last bed, then in my weakest estate, these powers and principalities shall be in their full practice against me. And therefore it is one great advancement of thy deliverance, to be brought by this angel, that is, by the ministry of the Gospel of Christ, to know that thou hast angels to thine enemies; and then another is to know their number, and so the strength of their confederacy; for, in the verse before the text, they are expressed to be four, (*I saw four angels*, &c.)

Four legions of angels, four millions, nay, four creations of angels could do no more harm, than is intended in these four; for, (as it is said in the former verse) *They stood upon the four corners of the earth*, they bestrid, they cantoned the whole world. Thou hast opposite angels enow to batter thee every where, and to cut off and defeat all succours, all supplies, that thou canst procure, or propose to thyself; absolute enemies to one another will meet and join to thy ruin, and even presumption will induce desperation. We need not be so literal in this, as St. Hierome, (who indeed in that followed Origen) to think that there is a particular evil angel over every sin; that because we find that mention of *the spirit of error*, and *the spirit of slumber*, and *the spirit of fornication*, we should therefore think that Christ meant by *mammon*[47], a particular spirit of covetousness, and that there be several princes over several sins. This needs not; when thou art tempted, never ask that spirit's name; his name is *Legion*,

[45] 1 Tim. iv. 1. [46] Hosea iv. 12; v. 4. [47] Matt. vi. 24.

for he is many[48]. Take thyself at the largest, as thou art a world, there are four angels at thy four corners; let thy four corners be thy worldly profession, thy calling, and another thy bodily refection, thy eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and a third thy honest and allowable recreations, and a fourth thy religious service of God in this place, (which two last, that is, recreation, and religion, God hath been pleased to join together in the Sabbath, in which he intended his own glory in our service of him, and then the rest of the creature too) let these four, thy calling, thy sleeping, thy recreation, thy religion be the four corners of thy world, and thou shalt find an angel of temptation at every corner; even in thy sleep, even in this house of God thou hast met them. The devil is no recusant; he will come to church, and he will lay his snares there; *When that day comes, that the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, Satan comes also among them*[49]. Not only so, St. Augustine confesses he met him at church, to carry wanton glances between men and women, but he is here, sometimes to work a mis-interpretation in the hearer, sometimes to work an affectation in the speaker, and many times doth more harm by a good sermon than by a weak, by possessing the hearers with an admiration of the preacher's gifts, and neglecting God's ordinance. And then it is not only their natural power, as they are angels, nor their united power, as they are many, nor their politic power, that in the midst of that confusion which is amongst them, yet they agree together to ruin us, but (as it follows in our text) it is *Potestas data*, A particular power, which, besides their natural power, God, at this time, put into their hands; (*He cried to the four angels, to whom power was given to hurt*) all other angels had it not, nor had these four that power at all times, which, in our distribution at first we made a particular consideration.

It was *potestas data*, a special commission that laid Job open to Satan's malice; it was *potestas data*, a special commission, that laid the herd of swine open to the devil's transportation[50]: much more, no doubt, have the particular saints of God in the assistances of the Christian church, (for Job had not that assist-

[48] Mark v. 9. [49] Job i. 6. [50] Matt. viii. 32.

ance, being not within the covenant) and most of all hath the church of God herself, an ability, in some measure, to defend itself against many machinations and practices of the devil, if it were not for this *potestas data*, that God, for his further glory, in the trial of his saints, and his church, doth enable the devil to raise whole armies of persecutors, whole swarms of heretics, to sting and wound the church, beyond that ordinary power, which, the devil in nature hath. That place, *Curse not the king, no, not in thought, for that which hath wings shall tell the matter*[51], is ordinarily understood of angels; that angels shall reveal disloyal thoughts; now, naturally angels do not understand thoughts; but, in such cases, there is *potestas data*, a particular power given them to do it; and so to evil angels, for the accomplishment of God's purposes, there is *potestas data*, a new power given, a new commission, that is beyond permission; for, though by God's permission mine eye see, and mine ear hear, yet my hand could not see nor hear by God's permission; for permission is but the leaving of a thing to the doing of that, which by nature, if there be no hinderance interposed, it could, and would do.

This comfort then, and this hope of deliverance hast thou here, that this angel in our text, that is, the ministry of the Gospel, tells thee, that that rage which the devil uses against thee now, is but *potestas data*, a temporary power given him for the present; for, if thy afflictions were altogether from the natural malice and power of the devil, inherent in him, that malice would never end, nor thy affliction neither, if God should leave all to him. And therefore though those our afflictions be heavier, which proceed *ex potestate data*, when God exalts that power of the devil, which naturally he hath, with new commissions, besides his permission to use his natural strength, and natural malice, yet our deliverance is the nearer too, because all these accessory and occasional commissions are for particular ends, and are limited, how far they shall extend, how long they shall endure. Here, the *potestas data*, the power which was given to these angels, was large, it was general, for, (as it is in the former verse) it was a power *to hold the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.* What this withholding

[51] Eccles. x. 20.

of the wind signifies, and the damnification of that, is our next consideration.

By the land, is commonly understood all the inhabitants of the land; by the sea, islanders, and sea-faring men, half inhabitants of the sea; and by the trees, all those whom persecution had driven away, and planted in the wilderness. The hinderance of the use of the wind, being taken by our expositors to be a general impediment of the increase of the earth, and of commerce at sea. But this Book of the Revelation must not be so literally understood, as that the winds here should signify merely natural winds; there is more in this than so; thus much more, that this withholding of the winds, is a withholding of the preaching and passage of the Gospel: which is the heaviest misery that can fall upon a nation, or upon a man, because thereby, by the misery of not hearing, he loses all light, and means of discerning his own misery. Now as all the parts, and the style and phrase of this Book is figurative and metaphorical, so is it no unusual metaphor, even in other Books of the Scripture too, to call the ministers, and preachers of God's word, by the name of winds. *Arise O North, and come O South, and blow on my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out*[52], hath always been understood to be an invitation, a compellation from Christ to his ministers, to dispense and convey salvation, by his Gospel, to all nations. And upon those words, *Producit ventos, He bringeth winds out of his treasuries*[53], and *Educit nubes, He bringeth clouds from the ends of the earth, Puto prædicatores et nubes et ventos*, says St. Augustine, I think that the Holy Ghost means both by his *clouds*, and by his *winds*, the preachers of his word, the ministers of the Gospel, *Nubes propter carnem, ventos propter spiritum;* Clouds because their bodies are seen, winds because their working is felt; *Nubes cernuntur, venti sentiuntur;* As clouds they embrace the whole visible church, and are visible to it; as winds they pierce into the invisible church, the souls of the true saints of God, and work, though invisibly, upon them. So also those words, *God rode upon a cherub, and did fly, he did fly upon the wings of the wind*[54], have been well interpreted of God's being pleased

[52] Cant. iv. 16. [53] Psal. cxxxv. 7. [54] Psal. xviii. 10.

to be carried from nation to nation, by the service of his ministers.

Now this is the nature of this wind, (of the Spirit of God breathing in his ministers) *Spirat ubi vult*[55], That it blows where it lists; and this is the malice of these evil angels, that it shall not do so. But this angel, *which hath the seal of the living God*, that is, the ministry of the Gospel established by him, shall keep the winds at their liberty; and howsoever waking dreamers think of alterations and tolerations, howsoever men that disguise their expectations with an outward conformity to us, may think the time of declaring themselves grows on apace; howsoever the slumbering of capital laws, and reason of state may suffer such mistakers to flatter themselves, yet God hath made this angel of the East, this Gospel of his to ascend so far now, and to take so deep root, as that now this one angel is strong enough for the other four, that is, the sincere preaching of the Gospel, in our settled and well disciplined church, shall prevail against those four pestilent opposites, atheists, and papists, and sectaries, and carnal indifferent men, who all would hinder the blowing of this wind, the effect of this Gospel. And to this purpose our angel in the text is said to have cried with a loud voice, (*He cried with a loud voice to the four angels*).

For our security therefore that this wind shall blow still, that this preaching of the Gospel which we enjoy shall be transferred upon our posterity in the same sincerity, and the same integrity, there is required an assiduity, and an earnestness in us, who are in that service now, in which this angel was then, in our preaching. *Clamavit*, our angel cried, (it was his first act, nothing must retard our preaching) and *Voce magna*, *He cried with a loud voice;* (he gave not over with one calling) What is this crying aloud in our angel? *Vocis modum, audientium necessitas definit*[56]; The voice must so loud, as they, to whom we speak, are quick or thick of hearing. *Submissa, quæ ad susurrum propriè accedit, damnanda*, A whispering voice was not the voice of this angel, nor must it be of those angels that are figured in him; for that is a voice of a conventicle, not a church voice. That is

[55] John iii. 8. [56] Basil.

a loud voice that is heard by them whom it concerns. So the catechizing of children, though in a familiar manner, is a loud voice, though it be not a sermon: so writing in defence of our religion, is a loud voice, though in the mean time a man intermit his preaching: so the speaking by another, when sickness or other services withhold him that should, and would speak, is a loud voice even from him.

And therefore though there be no evident, no imminent danger of withholding these winds, of inhibiting or scanting the liberty of the Gospel, yet because it is wished by too many, and because we can imagine no punishment too great for our neglecting the Gospel, it becomes us, the ministers of God, by all these loud voices, of catechizing, of preaching, of writing, to cry, and to cry, (though not with vociferations, or seditious jealousies and suspicions of the present government) yet to cry so loud, so assiduously, so earnestly, as all whom it concerns (and it concerns all) may hear it: hurt not the earth, withhold not the winds, be you no occasions, by your neglecting the Gospel of Christ Jesus, that he suffer it to be removed from you; and know withal, that you do neglect this Gospel, (how often soever you hear it preached) if you do not practise it. Nor is that a sufficient practice of hearing, to desire to hear more, except thy hearing bring thee to leave thy sins; without that, at the last day thou shalt meet thy sermons amongst thy sins; and when Christ Jesus shall charge thee with false weights and measures in thy shop all the week, with prevarication in judgment, with extortion in thy practice, and in thine office, he shall add to that, and besides this, thou wast at church twice that Sunday; when he shall have told thee, Thou didst not feed me, thou didst not clothe me, he shall aggravate all with that, Yet thou heardst two sermons that Sunday, besides thine interlineary week lectures. The means to keep this wind awake, (to continue the liberty of the Gospel) is this loud voice, (assiduous and pertinent preaching) but sermons unpractised are three-piled sins, and God shall turn, as their prayers, so their preaching, into sin. For this injunction, this inhibition which this angel serves upon the four angels, That they should not hurt the world by withholding the winds, that is, not hinder the propagation and passage of the Gospel, was not

perpetual; it was limited with a *donec*, till something were done in the behalf and favour of the world, and that was, *till the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads*, which is our last consideration.

The servants of God being sealed in their foreheads in the sacrament of baptism, when they are received into the care of the church, all those means which God hath provided for his servants, in his church, to resist afflictions and temptations, are intended to be conferred upon them in that seal; this sealing of them is a communicating to them all those assistances of the Christian church: then they have a way of prevention of sin, by hearing; a way to absolution, by confession; a way to reconciliation, by a worthy receiving the body and blood of Christ Jesus: and these helps of the Christian church, thus conferred in baptism, keep open still, (if these be rightly used) that other seal, the seal of the Spirit; *After ye heard the Gospel, and believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*[57]: and so also, *God hath anointed us, and sealed us, and given us the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts*[58]. So that besides the seal in the forehead, which is an interest and title to all the assistances and benefits of the church, public prayer, preaching, sacraments and sacramental helps, there is a seal of the Spirit of God, that that Spirit bears witness with my spirit, that I perform the conditions passed between God and me, under the first seal, my baptism. But because this second seal, (the obsignation and testification of the inward spirit) depends upon the good use of the first seal, (the participation of the helps of the church, given me in baptism) therefore the *donec* in our text, (*Hurt them not till they be sealed*) reaches but to the first seal, the seal of baptism, and in that, of all God's ordinary graces, ordinarily exhibited in his ordinances.

So then, this angel takes care of us, till he have delivered us over to the sweet and powerful helps of that church, which God hath purchased with his blood; when he hath placed us there, he looks that we should do something for ourselves, which, before we were there, and made partakers of God's graces in his church by baptism, we could not do; for in this, this angel's commission

[57] Ephes. i. 13. [58] 2 Cor. i. 22.

determines, that we be sealed in the foreheads, that we be taken from the common, into God's inclosures, impaled in his park, received into his church, where our salvation depends upon the good use of those means. Use therefore those means well; and put not God to save thee, by a miracle, without means. Trust not to an irresistible grace, that at one time or other God will have thee, whether thou wilt or no. *Tolle voluntatem, et non est infernus*[59]; If thou couldst quench thine own will, thou hadst quenched hell; if thou couldst be content, willing to be in hell, hell were not hell. So, if God save a man against his will, heaven is not heaven; if he be loath to come thither, sorry that he shall be there, he hath not the joy of heaven, and then heaven is not heaven. Put not God to save thee by miracle; God can save an image by miracle; by miracle he can make an image a man; if man can make God of bread, certainly God can make a man of an image, and so save him; but God hath made thee his own image, and afforded thee means of salvation: use them. God compels no man. The master of the feast invited many[60]; solemnly, before hand; they came not: he sent his servants to call in the poor, upon the sudden; and they came: so he receives late comers. And there is a *compella intrare*, he sends a servant to compel some to come in. But that was but a servant's work, the master only invited; he compelled none. We the servants of God, have certain compulsories, to bring men hither; the denouncing of God's judgments, the censures of the church, excommunications, and the rest, are compulsories. The state hath compulsories too, in the penal laws. But all this is but to bring them into the house, to church; *compelle intrare*. We can compel them to come to the first seal, to baptism; we can compel men, to bring their children to that sacrament; but to salvation, only the master brings; and (in that parable) the master does only invite; he compels none: though his corrections may seem to be compulsories, yet even his corrections are sweet invitations; his corrections are so far from compelling men to come to heaven, as that they put many men further out of their way, and work an obduration, rather than an obsequiousness.

[59] Bernard. [60] Luke xiv. 23.

With those therefore that neglect the means, that he hath brought them to, in sealing them in the forehead, this angel hath no more to do, but gives them over to the power of the four destroying angels. With those that attend those means, he proceeds; and, in their behalf, his *donec*, (Spare them till I have sealed them) becomes the blessed Virgin's *donec*[61], she was a Virgin till she had her child, and a Virgin after too; and it becomes our blessed Saviour's *donec*[62], He sits at his Father's right hand, till his enemies be made his footstool, and after too; so these destroying angels, that had no power over them till they were sealed, shall have no power over them after they are sealed, but they shall pass from seal to seal; after that seal on the forehead, *Ne erubescant evangelium*, (*We sign him with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified*[63]) he shall come also to those seals, which our Saviour recommends to his spouse, *Set me as a seal on thy heart, and as a seal on thine arm*[64]; St. Ambrose collects them, and connects them together, *Signaculum Christi in corde, ut diligamus, in fronte, ut confiteamur, in brachio, ut operemur;* God seals us in the heart, that we might love him, and in the forehead, that we might profess it, and in the hand, that we might declare and practise it; and then the whole purpose of this blessed angel in our text, is perfected in us, and we ourselves are made partakers of the solemnity of this day, which we celebrate, for we ourselves enter in the communion of saints, by these three seals, of belief, of profession, of works and practice.

[61] Matt. i. 25.
[62] Psal. cx. 1.
[63] Rom. i. 16.
[64] Cant. viii. 6.

# SERMON XLIV.

*PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S, THE SUNDAY AFTER THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL,* 1624.

Acts ix. 4.

**And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?**

*Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us*[1], (says the wise man) that is, that assisted our second generation, our spiritual regeneration; let us praise them, commemorate them. *The Lord hath wrought great glory by them, through his power from the beginning*, says he there, that is, it hath always been the Lord's way to glorify himself in the conversion of men, by the ministry of men. For he adds, *They were leaders of the people by their counsel, and by their knowledge and learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent men in their instructions;* and that is, that God who gives these gifts for this purpose, looks for the employment of these gifts, to the edification of others, to his glory. *There be of them, that have left a name behind them*, (as it is also added in that place) that is, that though God can amply reward his servants in the next world, yet he does it sometimes in this world; and, though not with temporal happinesses, in their life, yet with honour, and commemorations, and celebrations of them, after they are gone out of this life, they leave a name behind them. And amongst them, in a high place, shines our blessed and glorious apostle St. Paul, whose conversion the church celebrates now, and for the celebration thereof, hath appointed this part of Scripture from whence this text arises, to be the epistle of the day, *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

There are words in the text, that will reach to all the story of St. Paul's conversion, embrace all, involve and enwrap all; we must contract them; into less than three parts, we cannot well: those will be these; first, the person, Saul, he, *he fell to the earth;* and then, his humiliation, his exinanition of himself, his divesting, putting off of himself, *he fell to the earth;* and lastly,

[1] Ecclus. xliv. 1.

his investing of Christ, his putting on of Christ, his rising again by the power of a new inanimation, a new soul breathed into him from Christ, *He heard a voice, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Now, a re-distribution, a subdivision of these parts, into their branches, we shall present to you anon, more opportunely, as we shall come in due order to the handling of the parts themselves. In the first, the branches will be but these; Saul's indisposition when Christ took him in hand, and Christ's work upon him; what he found him, what he left him, will determine our first part, the person.

First then, what he was at that time, the Holy Ghost gives evidence enough against him, and he gives enough against himself. Of that which the Holy Ghost gives, you may see a great many heavy pieces, a great many appliable circumstances, if at any time, at home, you do but paraphrase, and spread to yourselves the former part of this chapter, to this text. Take a little preparation from me: *Adhuc spirans*, says the first verse, *Saul yet breathing threatenings and slaughter*, then when he was in the height of his fury, Christ laid hold upon him. It was, for the most part, Christ's method of curing. Then when the sea was in a tempestuous rage[s], when the waters covered the ship, and the storm shaked even that which could remove mountains, the faith of the disciples, then Christ rebukes the wind, and commands a calm. Then when the sun was gone out to run his race as a giant, (as David speaks) then God by the mouth of another, of Joshua, bids the sun stand still. Then when that unclean spirit foamed, and fumed, and tore, and rent the possessed persons, then Christ commanded them to go out. Let the fever alone, say our physicians, till some fits be passed, and then we shall see further, and discern better. The note is St. Chrysostom's and he applies it to Christ's proceeding with Saul; *Non expectavit ut fatigatus debacchando mansuesceret*, says he, Christ stayed not till Saul being made drunk with blood, were cast into a slumber, as satisfied with the blood of Christians; *Sed in media insania superavit*, but in the midst of his fit, he gave him physic, in the midst of his madness, he reclaims him. So is it also part of the evidence that the Holy Ghost gives against him, *Quod*

[s] Matt. viii. 24.

*petiit epistolas*, that he sued to the state for a commission to persecute Christians. When the state will put men to some kind of necessity of concurring to the endamaging or endangering of the cause of Christ, and will be displeased with them, if they do not, men make to themselves, and to their consciences some faint colour of excuse: but when they themselves set actions on foot, which are not required at their hands, where is their evasion? Then when Saul sued out this commission, *That if he found any of that way*, (that is, Christians) (for he had so scattered them before, that he was not sure to find any, they did not appear in any whole body, dangerous, or suspicious to the state) but, if he found any, *Any man or woman*, that he might have the power of the state, so as that he need not fear men, that he might have the impartiality, and the inflexibility of the state, so as that he need not pity women, then when his glory was *to bring them bound to Jerusalem*, that he might magnify his triumph and greatness in the eye of the world, then, says Christ, to this tempest, Be calm, to this unclean spirit, Come out, to this sun, in his own estimation, Go no further.

Thus much evidence the Holy Ghost gives against him; and thus much more himself, *I persecuted this way unto the death; I bound and delivered into prison, both men and women*[3]; and after, more than this, *I punished them*, and that oft, and, *in every synagogue*, and, *compelled them to blaspheme*, and, *was exceedingly mad against them, and persecuted them even unto strange cities*[4]. What could he say more against himself? And then, says Christ, to this tempest, *Quiesce*, Be still, to this glaring sun, *Siste*, Stand still, to this unclean spirit, *Veni foras*, Come forth. In this sense especially doth St. Paul call himself *Abortivum*, a person born out of season[5], that whereas Christ's other disciples and apostles, had a breeding under him, and came first *ad discipulatum*, and then *ad apostolatum*, first to be disciples, and after to be apostles; St. Paul was born a man, an apostle, not carved out, as the rest, in time; but a fusil apostle, an apostle poured out, and cast in a mould; as Adam was a perfect man in an instant, so was St. Paul an apostle, as soon as Christ took him in hand.

Now, beloved, wilt thou make this perverse use of this pro-

[3] Acts xxii. 4. [4] Acts xxvi. 11. [5] 1 Cor. xv. 2.

ceeding, God is rich in mercy, therefore I cannot miss mercy? Wouldest thou say, and not be thought mad for saying so, God hath created a West Indies, therefore I cannot want gold? Wilt thou be so ill a logician to thyself, and to thine own damnation, as to conclude so, God is always the same in himself, therefore he must be always the same to me? So ill a musician as to say, God is all concord, therefore he and I can never disagree? So ill a historian as to say, God hath called Saul, a persecutor, then when he breathed threatenings and slaughter, then when he sued to the state for a commission to persecute Christ, God hath called a thief, then when he was at the last gasp; and therefore if he have a mind to me, he will deal so with me too, and, if he have no such mind, no man can imprint, or infuse a new mind in God? God forbid. It is not safe concluding out of single instances. It is true, that if a sour, and heavy, and severe man, will add to the discomforts of a disconsolate soul, and in that soul's sadness, and dejection of spirit, will heap up examples, that God hath still suffered high-minded sinners to proceed and to perish in their irreligious ways, and tell that poor soul, (as Job's company did him) It is true, you take God aright, God never pardons such as you, in these cases, these singular, these individual examples, that God hath done otherwise once, have their use. One instance to the contrary destroys any peremptory rule, no man must say, God never doth it; he did it to Saul here, he did it to the thief upon the cross. But to that presumptuous sinner, who sins on, because God showed mercy to one at last, we must say, a miserable comforter is that rule, that affords but one example. Nay, is there but one example? The conversion of Saul a persecutor, and of the thief upon the cross is become *proverbium peccatorum*[6], the sinner's proverb, and serves him, and satisfies him in all cases. But is there any such thing? Such a story there is, and it is as true as gospel, it is the truth of gospel itself; but was this a late repentance? Answer St. Cyril, *Rogo te frater*, Tell me, beloved, thou that deferrest thy repentance, doest thou do it upon confidence of these examples? *Non in fine, sed in principio conversus latro;* thou deludest thine own soul; the thief was not converted at last, but at first; as soon as God afforded him any call, he

[6] Gregory.

came; and at how many lights hast thou winked? And to how many calls hast thou stopped thine ears, that deferrest thy repentance? Christ said to him, *Hodie mecum eris, This day thou shalt be with me in paradise*; when thou canst find such another day, look for such another mercy; a day that cleft the grave-stones of dead men; a day that cleft the temple itself; a day that the sun durst not see; a day that saw the soul of God (may we not say so, since that man was God too) depart from man; there shall be no more such days; and therefore presume not of that voice, *hodie*, this day thou shalt be with me, if thou make thy last minute that day, though Christ, to magnify his mercy, and his glory, and to take away all occasion of absolute desperation, did here, under so many disadvantages, call, and draw St. Paul to him.

But we say no more of that, of the danger of sinning by precedent, and presuming of mercy by example; we pass from our first consideration, from what, to the other, to what, Christ brought this persecutor, this Saul. He brought him to that remarkable height, as that the church celebrates the conversion of no man but this. Many bloody executioners were converted to Christ, even in the act of that bloody execution; then when they took a delight in tearing the bowels of Christians, they were received into the bowels of Christ Jesus, and became Christians. Men that rode to market, and saw an execution upon the way; men that opened a window to take air, and saw an execution in the street; the ecclesiastical story abounds with examples of occasional convertites, and upon strange occasions; but yet the church celebrates no conversion but this. The church doth not consider the martyrs as born till they die; till the world see how they persevered to the end, she takes no knowledge of them; therefore she calls the days of their deaths, *natalitia*, their birth-days; then she makes account they are born, when they di[illegible] St. Paul t[illegible]hurch makes herself assured th[illegible] therefore c[illegible]nversion, and no[illegible] a true tr[illegible]sanctification, and a new sacrament. These few words, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*, are words of consecration; after these words, Saul was no longer Saul, but he was Christ: *Vivit in me Christus*, says he, *It is not I that live*, not I

that do anything, *but Christ in me.* It is but a little way that St. Chrysostom goes, when he speaks of an inferior transubstantiation, of a change of affections, and says *Agnus ex lupo*, That here is another manner of lycanthropy, than when a man is made a wolf; for here a wolf is made a lamb, *Ex lupo agnus. Ex vepribus racemus*, says that father, A bramble is made a vine; *Ex zizaniis frumentum*, Cockle and tares become wheat; *Ex pirata gubernator*, A pirate becomes a safe pilot; *Ex novissimo primus*, The lees are come to swim on the top, and the last is grown first; and *Ex abortivo perfectus*, He that was born out of time, hath not only the perfection, but the excellency of all his lineaments. St. Chrysostom goes further than this, *Ex blasphemo, os Christi, et lyra spiritus*, He that was the mouth of blasphemy, is become the mouth of Christ, he that was the instrument of Satan, is now the organ of the Holy Ghost. He goes very far, when he says, *In cœlis homo, in terris angelus*, Being yet but upon earth, he is an angel, and being yet but a man, he is already in heaven. Yet St. Paul was another manner of sacrament, and had another manner of transubstantiation, than all this; as he was made *idem spiritus cum Domino*, the same spirit with the Lord, so in his very body, he had *stigmata*, the very marks of the Lord Jesus[7]. From such a lowness, raised to such a height, as that Origen says, Many did believe, that St. Paul had been that Holy Ghost, which Christ had promised to the world, after his departing from it.

It is but a little way that St. Jerome hath carried his commendation neither, when he calls him *Rugitum leonis*, The roaring of a lion, if we consider how little a forest the roaring of a lion is determined; but that he call him *Rugitum leonis nostri*, The roaring of our lion, of the lion of the tribe of Juda, that as far as Christ is heard, St. Paul is heard too: *Quem quoties lego, non verba mihi, videor audire, sed tonitrua*, Wheresoever I open St. Paul's Epistles, I meet not words, but thunders; and universal thunder, thunder that passes through all the world. For, *Ejus excæcatio totius orbis illuminatio*[8], That that was done upon him, wrought upon all the world; he was struck blind, and all the world saw the better for that. So universal a priest (says St.

[7] Gal. vi. 17. [8] Theodoret.

Chrysostom, who loves to be speaking of St. Paul) as that he sacrificed, not sheep and goats, *sed seipsum*, but himself; and not only that, *sed totum mundum*, he prepared the whole world, as a sacrifice to God. He built an ark, that is, established a church; and to this day, receives, not eight, but all into that ark; and whereas in Noah's ark, *Quem corvum recepit, corvum emisit*, If he came in a raven, he went out a raven; St. Paul, in his ark, *Ex milvis facit columbas*, as himself was, so he transubstantiates all them, and makes them doves of ravens. Nay, so over-absolutely did he sacrifice himself, and his state in this world, for this world, as that he sacrificed his reversion, his future state, the glory and joy of heaven, for his brethren, and chose rather to be *anathema*, separated from Christ, than they should. I love thee, says St. Chrysostom to Rome, for many excellencies, many greatnesses; but I love thee so well, says he, therefore because St. Paul loved thee so well. *Qualem rosam Roma Christo*, (as he pursues this contemplation) What a fragrant rose shall Rome present Christ with, when he comes to judgment, in re-delivering to him the body of St. Paul? And though he join them both together, *Jugati boves ecclesiæ*, That St. Peter and St. Paul were that yoke of oxen that ploughed the whole church, though he say of both, *Quot carceres sanctificatis?* How many prisons have you two consecrated, and made prisons churches? *Quot catenas illustratis?* How many fetters and chains of iron have you two changed into chains of gold? Yet we may observe a difference in St. Chrysostom's expressing of persons to equal to one another, *Quid Petro majus?* says he, but, *Quid Paulo par fuit?* What can exceed Peter, or what can equal Paul? Still be all this far from occasioning any man to presume upon God, because he afforded so abundant mercy to a persecutor: but still from this, let every faint soul establish itself in a confidence in God; God that would find nothing to except, nothing to quarrel at, in St. Paul, will not lie heavy upon thy soul, though thou must say, as he did, *Quorum ego maximus*, That thou art a greater sinner than thou knowest any other man to be.

We are, in our order proposed at first, devolved now to our second part; from the person, and in that, what he was found, a vehement persecutor, and then, what he was made, a laborious

apostle, to the manner, to his humiliation, *Cecidit super terram*, *He fell*, and *he fell to the ground*, and *he fell blind*, as by the history, and context appears. We used to call every declination, of any kind, and in any subject, a falling; for, for our bodies, we say a man is fallen sick, and for his state, fallen poor; and for his mind, fallen mad, and for his conscience, fallen desperate; we are born low, and yet we fall every way lower, so universal is our fallen sickness. Sin itself is but a falling; the irremediable sin of the angels, the undeterminable sin of Adam, is called but so, *The fall of Adam*, *the fall of angels*. And therefore the effectual visitation of the Holy Ghost to man, is called a falling too; we are fallen so low, as that when the Holy Ghost is pleased to fetch us again, and to infuse his grace, he is still said *to fall upon us*. But the fall which we consider in the text, is not a figurative falling, not into a decay of estate, nor decay of health, nor a spiritual falling into sin, a decay of grace; but it is a medicinal falling, a falling under God's hand, but such a falling under his hand, as that he takes not off his hand from him that is fallen, but throws him down therefore that he may raise him. To this posture he brings Paul, now, when he was to reanimate him with his spirit; rather, to pre-inanimate him; for, indeed, no man hath a soul till he have grace.

Christ, who in his human nature hath received from the Father all judgment, and power, and dominion over this world, hath received all this, upon that condition that he shall govern in this manner, *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance*[9], says the Father; how is he to use them, when he hath them? Thus, *thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* Now, God meant well to the nation, in this bruising and breaking of them; God intended not an annihilation of the nations, but a reformation; for Christ asks the nations for an inheritance, not for a triumph; therefore it is intended of his way of governing them; and his way is to bruise and beat them; that is, first to cast them down, before he can raise them up, first to break them before he can make them in his fashion. *Novit Dominis vulnerare ad amorem*[10]; The Lord, and only the Lord knows how to wound us,

[9] Psalm ii. 8. [10] Augustine.

out of love; more than that, how to wound us into love; more than all that, to wound us into love, not only with him that wounds us, but into love with the wound itself, with the very affliction that he inflicts upon us; the Lord knows how to strike us so, as that we shall lay hold upon that hand that strikes us, and kiss that hand that wounds us. *Ad vitam interficit, ad exaltationem prosternit*, says the same father; No man kills his enemy therefore, that his enemy might have a better life in heaven; that is not his end in killing him: it is God's end; therefore he brings us to death, that by that gate he might lead us into life everlasting; and he hath not discovered, but made that northern passage, to pass by the frozen sea of calamity, and tribulation, to paradise, to the heavenly Jerusalem. There are fruits that ripen not, but by frost; there are natures, (there are scarce any other) that dispose not themselves to God, but by affliction. And as nature looks for the season for ripening, and does not all before, so grace looks for the assent of the soul, and does not perfect the whole work, till that come. It is nature that brings the season, and it is grace that brings the assent; but till the season for the fruit, till the assent of the soul come, all is not done.

Therefore God began in this way with Saul, and in this way he led him all his life, *Tot pertulit mortes, quot vixit dies*[11], He died as many deaths, as he lived days; for so himself says, *Quotidie morior, I die daily;* God gave him suck in blood, and his own blood was his daily drink; he catechised him with calamities at first, and calamities were his daily sermons, and meditations after; and to authorize the hands of others upon him, and to accustom him to submit himself to the hands of others without murmuring, Christ himself strikes the first blow, and with that, *cecidit, he fell*, (which was our first consideration, in his humiliation) and then, *cecidit in terram, he fell to the ground*, which is our next.

I take no further occasion from this circumstance, but to arm you with consolation, how low soever God be pleased to cast you, though it be to the earth, yet he does not so much cast you down, in doing that, as bring you home. Death is not a banishing of you out of this world; but it is a visitation of your kindred that lie

[11] Chrysostom.

in the earth; neither are any nearer of kin to you, than the earth itself, and the worms of the earth. You heap earth upon your souls, and encumber them with more and more flesh, by a superfluous and luxuriant diet; you add earth to earth in new purchases, and measure not by acres, but by manors, nor by manors, but by shires; and there is a little quillet, a little close, worth all these, a quiet grave. And therefore, when thou readest, That God makes thy bed in thy sickness, rejoice in this, not only that he makes that bed, where thou dost lie, but that bed where thou shalt lie; that that God, that made the whole earth, is now making thy bed in the earth, a quiet grave, where thou shalt sleep in peace, till the angel's trumpet wake thee at the resurrection, to that judgment where thy peace shall be made before thou comest, and writ, and sealed, in the blood of the Lamb.

Saul falls to the earth; so far; but he falls no lower. God brings his servants to a great lowness here; but he brings upon no man a perverse sense, or a distrustful suspicion of falling lower hereafter; His hand strikes us to the earth, by way of humiliation; but it is not his hand, that strikes us into hell, by way of desperation. Will you tell me, that you have observed and studied God's way upon you all your life, and out of that can conclude what God means to do with you after this life? That God took away your parents in your infancy, and left you orphans then, that he hath crossed you in all your labours in your calling, ever since, that he hath opened you to dishonours, and calumnies, and misinterpretations, in things well intended by you, that he hath multiplied sicknesses upon you, and given you thereby an assurance of a miserable, and a short life, of few, and evil days; nay, that he hath suffered you to fall into sins, that you yourselves have hated, to continue in sins, that you yourselves have been weary of, to relapse into sins, that you yourselves have repented; and will you conclude out of this, that God had no good purpose upon you, that if ever he had meant to do you good, he would never have gone thus far, in heaping of evils upon you? Upon what dost thou ground this? Upon thyself? Because thou shouldest not deal thus with any man, whom thou meanest well to? How poor, how

narrow, how impious a measure of God, is this, that he must do, as thou wouldst do, if thou wert God! God hath not made a week, without a Sabbath; no tentation, without an issue; God inflicts no calamity, no cloud, no eclipse, without light, to see ease in it, if the patient will look upon that which God hath done to him, in other cases, or to that which God hath done to others, at other times. *Saul fell to the ground*, but he fell no lower; God brings us to humiliation, but not to desperation.

*He fell; he fell to the ground*, and *he fell blind;* for so it is evident in the story. Christ had said to the Pharisees, *I came into the world, that they which see, might be made blind*[12]; and the Pharisees ask him, *Have you been able to do so upon us? Are we blind?* Here Christ gives them an example; a real, a literal, an actual example; Saul, a Pharisee, is made blind. He that will fill a vessel with wine, must take out the water; he that will fill a covetous man's hand with gold, must take out the silver that was there before, says St. Chrysostom. Christ, who is about to infuse new light into Saul, withdraws that light that was in him before; that light, by which Saul thought he saw all before, and thought himself a competent judge, which was the only true religion, and that all others were to be persecuted, even to death, that were not of his way. *Stultus factus est omnis homo à scientia*, says God in the prophet[13], Every man that trusts in his own wit, is a fool. But *let him become a fool, that he may be wise*, says the Apostle[14]; let him be so, in his own eyes, and God will give him better eyes, better light, better understanding. Saul was struck blind, but it was a blindness contracted from light; it was a light that struck him blind, as you see in his story. This blindness which we speak of, which is a sober and temperate abstinence from the immoderate study, and curious knowledges of this world, this holy simplicity of the soul, is not a darkness, a dimness, a stupidity in the understanding, contracted by living in a corner, it is not an idle retiring into a monastery, or into a village, or a country solitude, it is not a lazy affectation of ignorance; not darkness, but a greater light, must make us blind.

[12] John ix. 39. [13] Jer. li. 7. [14] 1 Cor. iii. 18.

The sight, and the contemplation of God, and our present benefits by him, and our future interest in him, must make us blind to the world so, as that we look upon no face, no pleasure, no knowledge, with such an affection, such an ambition, such a devotion, as upon God, and the ways to him. Saul had such a blindness, as came from light; we must affect no other simplicity, than arises from the knowledge of God, and his religion. And then, Saul had a blindness, as that he fell with it. There are birds, that when their eyes are sealed, still soar up, and up, till they have spent all their strength. Men blinded with the lights of this world, soar still into higher places, or higher knowledges, or higher opinions; but the light of heaven humbles us, and lays flat that soul, which the leaven of this world had puffed and swelled up. That powerful light felled Saul; but after he was fallen, his own sight was restored to him again; Ananias says to him, *Brother Saul, receive thy sight.* To those men, who employ their natural faculties to the glory of God, and their own, and others' edification, God shall afford an exaltation of those natural faculties; in those, who use their learning, or their wealth, or their power, well, God shall increase that power, and that wealth, and that learning, even in this world.

You have seen Saul's sickness, and the exaltation of the disease, then when he breathed threatenings, and slaughter, then when he went in his triumph; and you have seen his death, the death of the righteous, his humiliation, *he fell to the earth;* and there remains yet his resurrection; the angel of the great counsel, Christ Jesus, with the trumpet of his own mouth, raises him, with that, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

First, he affords him a call, *a voice.* Saul could not see; therefore he deals not upon him by visions. He gives a voice; and a voice that he might hear; God speaks often, when we do not hear; he *heard it*, and *heard it saying;* not a voice only, but a distinct, and intelligible voice; and *saying unto him*, that is, applicable to himself; and then, that that the voice said to him, was, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* We are unequal enemies, thou seest I am too hard for thee, *Cur tu me?* Why wilt thou, thou in this weakness oppose me? And then, we might be good friends, thou seest I offer parley, I offer treaty,

*Cur tu me?* Why wilt thou oppose me, me that declare such a disposition to be reconciled unto thee? In this so great a disadvantage on thy part, why wilt thou stir at all? In this so great a peaceableness on my part, why wilt thou stir against me? *Cur tu me? Why persecutest thou me?*

First then, God speaks: for, beloved, we are to consider God, not as he is in himself, but as he works upon us: the first thing that we can consider in our way to God, is his word. Our regeneration is by his word; that is, by faith, which comes by hearing; *The seed is the word of God*, says Christ himself[15]; even the seed of faith. Carry it higher, the creation was by the word of God: *Dixit, et facta sunt*, God spoke, and all things were made. Carry it to the highest of all, to eternity, the eternal generation, the eternal production, the eternal procession of the second Person in the Trinity, was so much by the word, as that he is the word; *Verbum caro*, It was that *word*, that was made *flesh*. So that God, who cannot enter into bands to us, hath given us security enough; he hath given us his word; his written word, his Scriptures; his essential word, his Son. Our principal, and radical, and fundamental security, is his essential word, his Son Jesus Christ. But how many millions of generations was this word in heaven, and never spoke? The word, Christ himself, hath been as long as God hath been: but the uttering of this word, speaking hath been but since the creation. Peter says to Christ, *To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*[16]. It is not only, thou art the word of eternal life; (Christ is so) but thou hast it; thou hast it, where we may come to thee for it; in thy treasury, in thine ordinance, in thy Church; thou hast it, to derive it, to convey it upon us. Here then is the first step to Saul's cure, and of ours, that there was not only a word, the word, Christ himself, a Son of God in heaven, but a voice, the word uttered, and preached; Christ manifested in his ordinance: *he heard a voice.*

He heard it. How often does God speak, and nobody hears the voice? He speaks in his cannon, in thunder, and he speaks in our cannon, in the rumour of wars. He speaks in his music, in the harmonious promises of the Gospel, and in our music, in

[15] Luke viii. 11. [16] John vi. 68.

the temporal blessings of peace, and plenty; and we hear a noise in his judgments, and we hear a sound in his mercies; but we hear no voice, we do not discern that this noise, or this sound comes from any certain person; we do not feel them to be mercies, nor to be judgments uttered from God, but natural accidents, casual occurrences, emergent contingencies, which as an atheist might think, would fall out though there were no God, or no commerce, no dealing, no speaking between God and man. Though Saul came not instantly to a perfect discerning who spoke, yet he saw instantly, it was a Person above nature, and therefore speaks to him in that phrase of submission, *Quis es Domine? Lord, who art thou?* And after, with trembling and astonishment, (as the text says) *Domine quid me vis facere? Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Then we are truliest said to hear, when we know from whence the voice comes. Princes are God's trumpet, and the Church is God's organ, but Christ Jesus is his voice. When he speaks in the prince, when he speaks in the Church, there we are bound to hear, and happy if we do hear. Man hath a natural way to come to God, by the eye, by the creature; so *visible things* show the *invisible God*[17]: but then, God hath superinduced a supernatural way, by the ear. For, though hearing be natural, yet that faith in God should come by hearing a man preach, is supernatural. God shut up the natural way, in Saul, seeing; he struck him blind; but he opened the supernatural way, he enabled him to hear, and to hear him. God would have us beholden to grace, and not to nature, and to come for our salvation, to his ordinances, to the preaching of his word, and not to any other means. Though he were blind, even that blindness, as it was a humiliation, and a diverting of his former glaring lights, was a degree of mercy, of preparative mercy; yet there was a voice, which was another degree; and a voice that he heard, which was a degree above that; and so far we are gone; and he heard it, *saying*, that is distinctly, and intelligibly, which is our next circumstance.

He hears him *saying*, that is, he hears him so, as that he knows what he says, so, as that he understands him; for he that hears the word, and understands it not, is subject to that which

[17] Rom. i.

Christ says, *That the wicked one comes, and catches away that that was sown*[18]. St. Augustine puts himself earnestly upon the contemplation of the creation, as Moses hath delivered it; he finds it hard to conceive, and he says[19], *Si esset ante me Moses*, If Moses who writ this were here, *Tenerem eum, et per te obsecrarem*, I would hold him fast, and beg of him, for thy sake, O my God, that he would declare this work of the creation more plainly unto me. But then, says that blessed father, *Si Hebræa voce loqueretur*, If Moses should speak Hebrew to me, mine ears might hear the sound, but my mind would not hear the voice; I might hear him, but I should not hear what he said. This was that that distinguished between St. Paul, and those who were in his company at this time; St. Luke says in this chapter[20], *That they heard the voice*, and St. Paul relating the story again[21], after says, *They heard not the voice of him that spoke to me;* they heard a confused sound, but they distinguished it not to be the voice of God, nor discerned God's purpose in it. In the twelfth of John[22], *There came a voice from Heaven*, from God himself, *and the people said, It thundered.* So apt is natural man to ascribe even God's immediate and miraculous actions to natural causes; apt to rest and determine in nature, and leave out God. The poet chides that wickedness, (as he calls it) to be afraid of God's judgments, or to call natural accidents judgments; *Quo morbo mentem concusse? timore Deorum*, says he; he says The conscience may be over tender, and that such timorous men, are sick of the fear of God, but it is a blessed disease, the fear of God, and the true way to true health. And though there be a moral constancy that becomes a Christian well, not to be easily shaken with the variations and revolutions of this world, yet it becomes him to establish his constancy in this, that God hath a good purpose in that action, not that God hath no hand in that action; that God will produce good out of it, not that God hath nothing to do in it. The magicians themselves were forced to confess *Digitum Dei*, The finger of God[23], in a small matter. Never think it a weakness, to call that a judgment of God, which others determine in nature; do so, so far as works

[18] Matt. xiii. 19. [19] Confes. l. i. c. 3. [20] Ver. 7.
[21] Acts xxii. 9. [22] Ver. 28. [23] Exod. vi. 16.

to thy edification, who seest that judgment, though not so far, as to argue, and conclude the final condemnation of that man upon whom that judgment is fallen. Certainly, we were better call twenty natural accidents judgments of God, than frustrate God's purpose in any of his powerful deliverances, by calling it a natural accident, and suffer the thing to vanish so, and God be left unglorified in it, or his Church unedified by it. Then we hear God, when we understand what he says; and therefore, as we are bound to bless God, that he speaks to us, and hears us speak to him, in a language which we understand, and not in such a strange language, as that a stranger, who should come in and hear it, would think the congregation mad[24]; so also let us bless him for that holy tenderness, to be apt to feel his hand in every accident, and to discern his presence in everything that befalls us. *Saul heard the voice, saying;* He understood what it said, and by that, found that it was directed *to him*, which is also another step in this last part.

This is an impropriation without sacrilege, and an enclosure of a common without damage, to make God mine own, to find that all that God says is spoken to me, and all that Christ suffered was suffered for me. And as Saul found this voice at first, to be directed to him, so ever after he bends his eye the same way, and observes the working of God especially upon himself; as at the beginning, so in the way too: particularly there, *By the grace of God I am that I am*[25]; and then, *His grace was bestowed on me, and not in vain;* and again, *I have laboured more abundantly than all;* and after all, still he considers himself, and finds himself to be the greatest sinner, *Quorum ego maximus.* It is called a greatness of spirit, or constancy, but it is indeed an incorrigible height of pride, when a man will not believe that he is meant in a libel, if he be not named in that libel. It is a fearful obduration, to be sermon-proof, or not to take knowledge, that a judgment is denounced against him, because he is not named in the denouncing of that judgment. Is not thy name Simon Magus, if thou buy and sell spiritual things thyself? And is not thy servant's name Gehazi, if he exact after? Is not thy name Cain, if thou rise up against thy brother? And is not thy name Zaccheus, if thou

[24] 1 Cor. xiv. 23. [25] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

multiply thy wealth by oppression? Is not thy name Dinah, if thou gad abroad, to see who will solicit thee? And is not the name of Potiphar's wife upon thee, if thou stay at home and solicit thy servants? Postdate the whole Bible, and whatsoever thou hearest spoken of such, as thou art, before, believe all that to be spoken but now, and spoken to thee. This was one happiness here, that Saul found this voice to be directed to him; and another (which is our last consideration) is what this voice said; it said, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

Here, to make sure of him, God calls him by his name, that he should not be able to transfer the summons upon any other, or say it was not he. They say that our *noctambulones*, men that walk in their sleep, will wake if they be called by their names. To wake Saul out of this dream, (for, to think to oppose Christ and his cause, is, in the highest person of the world, of what power or of what counsel soever, but a vertiginous dream, and a giddy vapour) to wake him, he calls him by his name, to let him know he means him; and to wake him thoroughly, he calls him twice, Saul, and Saul again. The great desolation which was to fall upon that land, God intimates, God interminates, God intonates with such a vehemency, *Terra, terra, terra, Earth, earth, earth hear the word of the Lord*[26]. God should be heard at first, believed at first; but such is his abundant goodness, as that he ingeminates, multiplies his warnings; and to this whole land he hath said, *Terra, terra, terra*, Earth, earth, earth hear the word of the Lord; once in an invasion, once in a powder-treason; and again, and again in pestilential contagions; and to every one of us, he hath said oftener than so, Dust, dust, dust why doest thou lift up thyself against thy Maker? *Saul, Saul why persecutest thou me?*

Here Christ calls the afflictions of those that are his, in his purpose, his afflictions. Christ will not absolutely verify his own words, to his own ease; he had said before this, upon the cross, *Consummatum est, All is finished;* but though all were finished in his person, he hath a daily passion in his saints still. This language which the apostle learnt of Christ here, himself practised,

[26] Jer. xxii. 29.

and spake after, *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not*[27]? Since Christ does suffer in our sufferings, be this our consolation, till he be weary, we should not be weary, nor faint, nor murmur under our burdens; and this too, that when he is weary, he will deliver us even for his own sake; for he, though he cannot suffer pain, may suffer dishonour in our sufferings; therefore attend his leisure.

We end all in this, *Cur tu me? Why doest thou persecute me?* Why Saul Christ? Put it upon a nation, (what is any Saul, any one man to a nation?) Put it upon all the nations of the world, and you shall hear God ask with an indignation, *Quare fremuerunt gentes? Why do the heathen rage, why do the people imagine a vain thing*[28]? Why will they do it? what can they get? *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.* Christ came into the Temple and disputed with the doctors; but he did not despise them, he did not laugh at them. When all the Midianites, and all the Amalekites, and all the children of the East, were in a body against Israel, God did not laugh at them. Gideon his general, mustered two and thirty thousand against them[29]. God would not employ so many in the day of battle, yet he did not laugh at them, he did not whip them out of the field, he made the face of an army, though it were but three hundred. But when God can choose his way, he can call in nation against nation, he can cast a damp upon any nation, and make them afraid of one another, he can do an execution upon them by themselves, (I presume you remember those stories in the Bible, where God did proceed by such ways) or he can sit still in a scorn, and let them melt away of themselves; when he can cast down Saul to the earth, and never appear in the cause, benight his noon, frustrate his purposes, evacuate his hopes, annihilate him in the height of his glory, *Cur tu me?* Why will any Saul, any nation, any world of Saul's persecute Christ, any sinner tempt him, who is so much too hard for him?

*Cur me?* Why doest thou offer this to me, who being thus much too hard for thee, would yet fain be friends with thee? and therefore came to a parley, to a treaty? for, *Verba hæc, non*

[27] 2 Cor. xi. 29. [28] Psalm ii. 1. [29] Judges vi. 33.

*tam arguentis, quam defendentis*, says St. Chrysostom: These are not so much offensive as defensive words; he would not confound Saul, but he would not betray his own honour. To many nations God hath never spoken; to the Jews he spoke, but suffered them to mistake him; to some whole Christian churches he speaks, but he lets them speak too; he lets them make their word equal to his; to many of us he hath spoken, and chidden, but given over before we are cured; as he says of Israel, in a manner, that she is not worth his anger, not worth his punishing, *A people laden with sins, why should they any more be smitten*[80]? Why should I go about to recover them? But if God speak to thee still, and speak in a mixed voice, of correction, and consolation too, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Him that receives so little benefit by thee, and yet is so loath to lose thee, him that can so easily spare thee, and yet makes thy soul more precious than his own life, him that can resolve thee, scatter thee, annihilate thee with a word, and yet afford so many words, so many hours' conferences, so many sermons to reclaim thee, why persecutest thou him? Answer this question, with Saul's answer to this question, by another question, *Domine quid me vis facere? Lord what wilt thou have me do?* Deliver thyself over to the will of God, and God shall deliver thee over, as he did Saul to Ananias; provide thee by his ministry in his ordinance, means to rectify thee, in all dejection of spirit, light to clear thee in all perplexities of conscience, in the ways of thy pilgrimage, and more and more effectual seals thereof, at the hour of thy transmigration into his joy, and thine eternal rest.

[80] Isaiah i. 4.

## SERMON XLV.

*PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S, THE SUNDAY AFTER THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, 27th JAN.* 1627.

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Acts xx. 25.

**And now, Behold, I know, that all ye among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.**

When St. Chrysostom calls Christmas day, *Metropolin omnium festorum*, The metropolitan holiday, the principal festival of the church, he is likely to intend only those festivals which were of the church's later institution, and means not to enwrap the Sabbath in that comparison. As St. Augustine says of the sacrament of baptism, that it is *Limen ecclesiæ*, The threshold over which we step into the church; so is Christmas day, *Limen festorum*, The threshold over which we step into the festival celebration of some other of Christ's actions, and passions, and victorious overcomings of all the acts of his passion, such as his resurrection, and ascension; for, but for Christmas day, we could celebrate none of these days; and so, that day is *Limen festorum*, The threshold over which we pass to the rest. But the Sabbath is not only *Limen*, or *Janua ecclesiæ*, The door by which we enter into the church, and into the consideration what the church hath done, but *Limen mundi*, The door by which we enter into the consideration of the world, how, and when the world was made of nothing, at the creation, without which, we had been so far from knowing that there had been a church, or that there had been a God, as that we ourselves had had no being at all. And therefore, as our very being is before all degrees of well-being, so is the Sabbath, which remembers us of our being, before all other festivals, that present and refresh to us the memory of our well-being: especially to us, to whom it is not only a Sabbath, as the Sabbath is a day of rest, in respect of the creation, but *Dies Dominicus*, The Lord's day, in respect of the redemption of the world, because the consummation of that work of redemption, for all that was to be done in this world, which was

the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, was accomplished upon that day, which is our Sabbath. But yet, as it did please God, to accompany the great day, the Sabbath, with other solemn days too, the Passover, and Pentecost, trumpets, and tabernacles, and others, and to call those other days Sabbaths, as well as the Sabbath itself; so, since he is pleased that in the Christian church, other days of holy convocations should also be instituted, I make account, that in some measure, I do both offices, both for observing those particular festivals that fall in the week, and also for the making of those particular festivals to serve the Sabbath, when upon the Sabbath ensuing, or preceding such or such a festival in the week, I take occasion to speak of that festival, which fell into the compass of that week; for, by this course, that festival is not pretermitted, nor neglected, the particular festival is remembered: and then, as God receives honour in the honour of his saints, so the Sabbath hath an honour, when the festivals, and commemorations of those saints, are reserved to wait upon the Sabbath.

Hence is it, that as elsewhere, I often do so, that is, celebrate some festival that falls in the week, upon the Sabbath: so, in this place, upon this very day, I have done the like, and return now, to do so again, that is, to celebrate the memory of our apostle St. Paul to-day, though there be a day past, since his day was, in the ordinary course, to have been celebrated. The last time that I did so, I did it in handling those words, *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Which was the very act of his conversion; a period, and a passage, which the church celebrates in none but in St. Paul; though many others were strangely converted too, she celebrates none but his. In the words chosen for this day, *And now behold I know*, &c., we shall reduce to your memories, first, his proceeding in the church after he was called, (*I have gone preaching the kingdom of God among you*) and then the ease, the reposedness, the acquiescence that he had in that knowledge, which God by his Spirit had given him, of the approach of his dissolution, and departure out of this life; (*I know that all you shall see my face no more*). As those things which we see in a glass, for the most part, must be behind us, so that that makes

our transmigration in death comfortable unto us, must be behind us, in the testimony of a good conscience, for things formerly done; *Now behold, I know, that all ye, among whom I have gone*, &c.

In handling of which words, our method shall be this; our general parts, being (as we have already intimated) these two, his way, and his end, his painful course, and his cheerful finishing of his course; his laborious battle, and his victorious triumph: in the first, (*I have gone preaching the kingdom of God among you*) we shall see first, That there is a *transivi*, as well as a *requievi* acceptable to God; a discharge of a duty, as well in going from one place to another, as in a perpetual residence upon one: *Transivi*, says our apostle, *I have gone among you*. But then, in a second consideration, in that first part, That that makes his going acceptable to God, is, because he goes to preach, *Transivi prædicans, I have gone preaching;* and then lastly, in that first part, That that, that makes his preaching acceptable, is, that he preached the kingdom of God, *Transivi prædicans regnum Dei, I have gone amongst you, preaching the kingdom of God.* And in these three characters of St. Paul's ministry, first, labour and assiduity; and then, labour bestowed upon the right means, preaching; and lastly, preaching to the right end, to edification, and advancing the kingdom of God, we shall determine our first part.

In our second part, we pass from his transition, to his transmigration; from his going up and down in the world, to his departing out of the world, *And now, behold, I know, that ye shall see my face no more.* In which, we shall look first, how St. Paul contracted this knowledge, how he knew it; and secondly, that the knowledge of it, did not disquiet him, not disorder him; he takes knowledge of it, with a confidence, and a cheerfulness. When he says, *I know it*, he seems to say, I am glad of it, or at least not troubled with it. And lastly, that St. Paul continues here, that way, and method, which he always uses; that is, to proceed by the understanding, to the affections, and so to the conscience of those that hear him, by such means of persuasion, as are most appliable to them, to whom he then speaks; and therefore knowing the power and efficacy of a dying, a departing man's words, he makes that impression in them, Observe, recol-

lect, remember, practise that which I have delivered unto you, for, *I know, that all ye shall see my face no more.* And so we shall bring up that circle, which was begun in heaven, in our last exercise, upon this occasion, in this place, when Christ said from thence, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* up into heaven again, in that *Euge bone serve*, which Christ hath said since unto him, *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into thy Master's joy;* and our apostle, whom, in our former exercise, for example of our humiliation, we found fallen to the earth, in this, to the assistance of our exaltation, in his, we shall find, and leave, upon the last step of Jacob's ladder, that is, entering into heaven, by the gate of death.

First then, in our first part, our first branch is, That there is a *transiri* as acceptable to God, as a *requieri;* that God was served in St. Paul, by applying his labours to many places, as well as if he had resided, and bestowed himself entirely upon any one. When Christ manifested himself at first unto him, trembling and astonished, he said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*[1]? And when Christ had told him, That in Damascus, from Ananias, he should receive his instructions, which were, *That he should bear his name, before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel*, after this commission was exhibited by Ananias, and accepted by St. Paul, that prophetical Scripture laid hold upon him, by way of acclamation, *Exultavit ut gigas ad currendum viam*[2], He rejoiced as a strong man to run a race, *He laboured more abundantly than they all*[3], *He carried the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum*[4], that is, as Hierome surveys it, *A mari rubro ad oceanum*, From the Red Sea (a sea within land) to the ocean without, from all within, to all without the covenant, Gentiles as well as Jews, *Deficiente eum prius terra, quam studio prædicandi*, He found an end of the world, but he found no end of his zeal, but preached as long as he found any to preach to. And as he exceeded in action, so did he in passion too; he joins both together, *In labours more abundant*, (there was his continual preaching) *in stripes above measure*, and then, *in prisons more frequent, in deaths often*[5]. Who dies more than once? Yet he dies often.

[1] Acts ix. 6. [2] Psal. xix. 6. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 10.
[4] Rom. xv. 19. [5] 2 Cor. xi. 23.

How often? Death that is every other man's everlasting fast, and fills him his mouth with earth, was St. Paul's *panis quotidianus*, his daily bread, *I protest*, says he, *by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ, I die daily.*

Though therefore we cannot give St. Paul a greater name than an apostle, (except there be some extraordinary height of apostleship enwrapped in that which he says of himself, *Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ*[6], that in that place he glory in a holy exultation, that he was made an apostle by Jesus Christ, then when Jesus Christ was nothing but Jesus Christ, then when he was glorified in heaven, and not a mortal man upon earth, as he was when he made his other apostles; and that in his being an apostle, there entered no such act of men, as did in the election of Matthias to that office, though Matthias were made after the ascension as well as he, in whose election those men presented God two names, and God directed that lot upon him, and so Matthias was reckoned amongst the eleven apostles[7]) though we need not procure to him, nor imagine for him, any other name than an apostle, yet St. Paul was otherwise an universal soul to the whole church, than many of the other apostles were, and had a larger liberty to communicate himself to all places, than any of them had. That is it which St. Chrysostom intends, when he extends St. Paul's dignity, *Angelis diversæ gentes commissæ*, To particular angels particular nations are committed; *Sed nullus angelorum*, says that father, No angel governed his particular nation better than St. Paul did the whole church. St. Chrysostom carries it so high; Isodore modifies it thus; he brings it from the angels of heaven, to the angels of the church, indeed the archangels of the church, the apostles themselves, and he says, *Apostolorum quisque regionem nactus unicam*, Every apostle was designed to some particular and certain compass, and did but that, in that, which St. Paul did in the whole world. But St. Chrysostom and Isidore both take their ground for that which they say, from that which St. Paul says of himself, *Besides these things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches*[8]; *for*,

[6] Gal. i. 1. [7] Acts i. ult. [8] 2 Cor. xi. 28.

says he, *who is weak, and I am not weak?* that is, who lacks anything, but I am ready to do it for him? Who suffers anything but I have compassion for him? We receive by fair tradition, and we entertain with a fair credulity, the other apostles to have been bishops, and thereby to have had a more certain centre, to which, naturally, that is, by the nature of their office, they were to incline. Not that nothing may excuse a bishop's absence from his see; for natural things, even naturally, do depart from those places to which they are naturally designed, and naturally affected, for the conservation of the whole frame and course of nature; for, in such cases, water will ascend, and air will descend; which motion is done naturally, though it be a motion from that place, to which they are naturally affected; and so may bishops from their particular churches; for, *Episcopus in ecclesia, et ecclesia in episcopo*[9], Every bishop hath a superintendency, and a residence in the whole church, and the whole church a residence, and a confidence in him. Therefore it is, that in some decretal, and some synodal letters, bishops are called *monarchæ*, monarchs, not only with relation to one diocese, but to the whole church; not only regal, but imperial monarchs.

The church of Rome makes bishops every day, of dioceses, to which they know those bishops can never come; not only in the dominions of princes in the Reformed religion, (which are not likely to admit them) but in the dominions of the Turk himself. And into the Council of Trent, they threw and thrust, they shoved and shovelled in such bishops in abundance: they created (that their numbers might carry all) new titular bishops of every place, in the Eastern, the Greek church, where there had ever been bishops before, though those very places were now no cities; not only not within his jurisdiction, but not at all, upon the face of the earth. But in better times than these, (though times, in which the church was much afflicted too) St. Cyril of Alexdria mentions six thousand bishops at once, against Nestorius. Now if the church had six thousand bishops at once, certainly all of them had not dioceses to reside upon; sometimes collateral necessities enforce a departing from exact regularity, in matter of government. So it did, when St. Ambrose was chosen bishop of

[9] Cyprian.

Milan in the West, and Nectarius bishop of Constantinople in the East, when they were both not only laymen, but unbaptized. But yet, though there be divers cases in which bishops may justly be excused from residence, (for they are still resident upon the church of God, if not upon the church of that city) yet naturally, and regularly an obligation falling upon them, of residence, the apostles were more bound to certain limits, by being bishops, than St. Paul was, of whom it does not appear that he was ever so. I know some later men have thought St. Paul a bishop: and they have found some satisfaction in that, that Niger, and Lucius, and Manaen laid their hands upon Barnabas and Paul[10]; nd that imposition of hands, say they, was a consecration; and this reason supplies them too, that Paul did consecrate other bishops, as Timothy of Ephesus, and Titus of Crete[11]. But since Niger, and Lucius, and Manaen that laid their hands upon Paul, were not bishops themselves, Paul cannot therefore be concluded to be a bishop, because he laid his hands upon others. Neither hath any of those few authors, which have imagined him to be a bishop, ever assigned or named any place of which he should be bishop; so that St. Paul had still another manner of liberty, and universality over the church, than the rest had, and therefore still avows his *transivi*, his peregrination, *I have gone among you.*

So then our blessed Saviour having declared this to be his way for the propagation of the Gospel, that besides the men that reside constantly upon certain places, there should be bishops that should spread farther than to a parish, and apostles farther than to a diocese, and a Paul farther than to a nation; as in the first plantation Christ found this necessary, so may it be still convenient, that in some cases, some persons, at some times, may be admitted to forbear their service, in some particular place, so they do not defraud the whole church of God by that forbearance. For so St. Paul, though he accuse himself, That he robbed other churches, taking wages of them[12], and yet served the Corinthians, thinks himself excusable in this, that he did this service in some part of the church of Christ, though not always to them in particular, from whom he received that recompense.

[10] Acts xiii. 3. [11] Tit. i. 5. [12] 2 Cor. xi. 11.

Now as this condemns our Brownists abroad, that have published their opinion to be, That no particular church, given to one man's cure, may consist of more persons than may always hear that man, all together, so neither doth this afford any favour to those men, who absent themselves from their charge, unnecessarily; and everything is unnecessary in a churchman, that is not done for the farther advancement of the church of God in general, and doth prejudice, or defraud a particular church. Therefore is St. Paul's *Transivi* in this text, accompanied with a *Prædicavi*, I have not resided in one place, *I have gone among you*, but I have gone among you *preaching*.

Athanasius in his Epistle to Dracontius, who refused to be bishop, says, If all men had been of your mind, who should have made you a Christian? Who should have been enabled to have ministered sacraments unto you, if there had been no bishop? But when he saw that he refused it therefore, because men when they come to that state, give themselves more liberty than such as laboured in inferior places did, and Dracontius seemed loath to open himself to the danger of that temptation, Athanasius says, *Licebit tibi in episcopatu esurire, sitire*, Fear not, I warrant you, you may be poor enough in a bishoprick, or if you be rich, no man will hinder you from living soberly in a plentiful fortune; *Novimus episcopos jejunantes*, says he, *et monachos comedentes*, I have known a bishop fast, when a monk or an hermit, hath made a good meal; *Nec corona pro locis, sed pro factis redditur*, God doth not crown every man that comes to the place, but him only that doth the duties of the place, when he is in it. And here one of the duties that induce our crown, is preaching, *I have gone among you preaching*.

Howsoever it be in practice in the church of Rome, that church durst not appear to the world, but in that declaration, *Præcipuum episcoporum munus est prædicatio*[13], The principal office of the bishop is to preach. And as there is no church in Christendom, (nay, let us magnify God in the fulness of an evident truth) not all the churches of God in Christendom, have more, or more useful preaching, than ours hath, from those to whom the cure of souls belongs: so neither were there ever any times, in which

[13] Conc. Trid. Sess. v. c. 2.

more men were preferred for former preaching, nor that continued it more, after their preferments, than in these our times. There may be, there should be a *transierunt*, A passing from place to place, but still it is as it should be, *Prædicando*, A passing for preaching, and a passing to preaching; and then, a preaching conditioned so, as St. Paul's was, *I have gone among you, preaching the kingdom of God.*

The kingdom of God, is the Gospel of God; that Gospel which the apostle calls *the glorious Gospel of God.* A kingdom consists not of slaves; slaves that have no will of their own. The children of the kingdom have so a will of their own, as that no man is damned, but for that, which he would not avoid, nor saved against his will; so we preach a kingdom. A kingdom acknowledges all their happiness from the king; so do we all the good use of all our faculties, will and all, from the grace of the King of heaven; so we preach a kingdom. A kingdom is able to subsist of itself, without calling in foreigners; the Gospel is so too, without calling in traditions; and so we preach a kingdom. A kingdom requires, besides fundamental subsistence, grounded especially in offensive, and defensive power, a support also of honour, and dignity, and outward splendour; the church of God requires also, besides unanimity in fundamental doctrines, an equanimity, and a mildness, and a charity, in handling problematical points, and also requires order, and comeliness in the outward face, and habit thereof; and so we preach a kingdom. So we preach a kingdom, as that we banish from thence, all imaginary fatality, and all decretory impossibility of concurrence, and co-operation to our own salvation, and yet we banish all pride, and confidence, that any natural faculties in us, though quickened by former grace, can lead us to salvation, without a continual succession of more and more grace; and so we preach a kingdom; so, as that we banish all spiritual treason, in setting up new titles, or making anything equal to God, or his word, and we banish all spiritual felony or robbery, in despoiling the church, either of discipline, or of possessions, either of order, or of ornaments. *Be the king's daughter all glorious within*[14]; yet, all her glory is not within;

[14] Psalm XLV. 13.

for, *her clothing is of wrought gold*, says that text. Still may she glory in her internal glory, in the sincerity, and in the integrity of doctrinal truths, and glory too in her outward comeliness, and beauty. So pray we, and so preach we the kingdom of God. And so we have done with our first part.

Our second part, to which in our order we are now come, is a passionate valediction, *Now I know, that all you shall see my face no more;* where first we inquire how he knew it. But why do we inquire that? They that heard him did not so: they heard it, and believed it, and lamented it. When St. Paul preached at Berea, his story says[15], that he was better believed there, than at Thessalonica; and the reason is given, *That there were nobler persons there;* persons of better quality, of better natures, and dispositions, and of more ingenuity; and so, as it is added, *They received the word with all readiness of mind.* Prejudices, and disaffections, and under-valuations of the abilities of the preacher, in the hearer, disappoint the purpose of the Holy Ghost, frustrate the labours of the man, and injure and defraud the rest of the congregation, who would, and would justly, like that which is said, if they were not misled, and shaked by those hearers: and so work also such jealousies and suspicions, that though his abilities be good, yet his end upon his auditory, is not their edification, but to work upon them, to other purposes. Though we require not an implicit faith in you, that you believe, because we say it, yet we require a holy nobleness in you, a religious good nature, a conscientious ingenuity, that you remember from whom we come, from the King of heaven, and in what quality, as his ambassadors; and so be apt to believe, that since we must return to him that sent us, and give him a relation of our negotiation, we dare not transgress our commission. The Bereans are praised for this, *That they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things that Paul said were so;* but this begun not at a jealousy, or suspicion in them, that they doubted, that that which he said, was not so, nor proceeded not to a gladness, or to a desire, that they might have taken him in a lie, or might have found, that that which he said, was not so; but *they searched the Scriptures, whether those things were so*, that so, having formerly believed him when he

[15] Acts xvii. 10.

preached, they might establish that belief, which they had received, by that, which was the infallible rock, and foundation of all, *the Scriptures*; they searched; but they searched for confirmation, and not upon suspicion.

In our present case, they to whom St. Paul said this, do not ask St. Paul how he knew, that they should see his face no more; they believed as we do, that he had it by revelation from God; and such knowledge is faith. *Tricubitalis erat, et cœlum attingit*, says St. Chrysostom; St. Paul was a man of low stature; but four foot and a half high, says he; and yet his head reached to the highest heaven, and his eyes saw, and his ears heard the counsels of God. Scarce any ambassador can show so many letters of his Master's own hand, as St. Paul could produce revelations; his King came to him, as often as other kings write to their ambassadors. He had his first calling by Revelation; he had his commission, his apostleship by Revelation; so he was directed to Jerusalem, and so to Rome; to both by Revelation; and so to Macedonia also. So he was confirmed, and comforted in the night, by vision, by Revelation; and so he was assured of the lives of all them, that suffered shipwreck with him at Malta. All his catechisms in the beginning, all his dictates in his proceeding, all his encouragements at his departing, were all revelation.

Every good man hath his conversation in heaven, and heaven itself had a conversation in St. Paul; and so, even the book of the Acts of the Apostles, is, as it were, a first part of the book of Revelation; Revelations to St. Paul, as the other was to St. John. This is the way that Christ promised to take with him, *I will show him, how great things he must suffer for my sake*[16]. And this way Christ pursued, *At Cæsarea, Agabus a prophet came from Judæa to Paul, and took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands, and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews bind the man that owns the girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles*[17]. This then was his case in our text, (for that revelation, by Agabus's prophecy, of his suffering, was after this) he had a revelation that he should never be seen by them more; but when, or how, or where he should die, he had not had

[16] Acts ix. 16. [17] Acts xx. 11.

a particular revelation then. He says, a little before our text, *I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem*[18]: That is, so bound by the Spirit, that if I should not go, I should resist the Spirit; but, says he, I know not the things that shall befall me there; not at Jerusalem; much less the last, and bitterest things, which were farther off; the things that should befall him at Rome, where he died. But from the very first, he knew enough of his death, to shake any soul, that were not sustained by the Spirit of God; which is another branch in this part, that no revelations, no apprehensions of death removed him from his holy intrepidness, and religious constancy.

We have a story in an author of St. Hierome's time, Palladius, that in a monastery of St. Isidore's, every monk that died in that house, was able, and ever did tell all the society, that at such a time he should die. God does extraordinary things, for extraordinary ends; but since we see no such ends, nor use of this, we are at our liberty, to doubt of the thing itself. God told Simeon, *that he should not die, till he had seen Christ;* but he did not tell him, that he should die as soon as he had seen him; but so much as was told him, was enough to make him content to die, when he had seen him, and to come to his *Nunc dimittis*, to that cheerfulness, as to sing his own requiem. God accustomed St. Paul, no doubt, to such notifications from him, and such apprehensions in himself of death, as, because it was not new, it could not be terrible. When St. Paul was able to make that protestation, *I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily*[19]; and again, *I am in prisons oft, and often in deaths, I die often*[20]; no executioner could have told him, you must die to-morrow, but he could have said, alas I died yesterday, and yesterday was twelvemonth, and seven year, and every year, and month, and week, and day, and hour before that. There is nothing so near immortality, as to die daily; for not to feel death, is immortality; and only he shall never feel death, that is exercised in the continual meditation thereof; continual mortification is immortality.

As cordials lose their virtue and become no cordials, if they be taken every day, so poisons do their venom too; if a man use

[18] Ver. 12. [19] 1 Cor. xv. 31. [20] 2 Cor. xi. 23.

himself to them, in small proportions at first, he may grow to take any quantity: he that takes a dram of death to-day, may take an ounce to-morrow, and a pound after; he that begins with that mortification of denying himself his delights, (which is a dram of death) shall be able to suffer the tribulations of this world, (which is a greater measure of death) and then death itself, not only patiently, but cheerfully; and to such a man, death is not a dissolution, but a redintegration; not a divorce of body and soul, but a sending of both divers ways, (the soul upward to heaven, the body downward to the earth) to an indissoluble marriage to him, who, for the salvation of both, assumed both, our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. Therefore does St. Paul say of himself, *If I be offered upon the sacrifice, and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all*[21], that is, it is a just occasion of our common joy, on your part, and on mine too; and therefore does St. Augustine say in his behalf, whatsoever can be threatened him, *Si potest vivere, tolerabile est*, Whatsoever does not take away life, may be endured; for, if it could not be endured, it would take away life; and, *Si non potest vivere*, says he, If it do take away life, what shall he feel, when he is dead? He adds the reason of all, *Opus cum fine, merces sine fine;* Death hath an end, but their reward that die for Christ, and their peace, that die in Christ, hath no end. Therefore was not St. Paul afraid of melancholy apprehensions, by drawing his death into contemplation, and into discourse; he was not afraid to think, nor to talk of his death; but then St. Paul had another end in doing so here, (which is our last consideration) to make the deeper impression in them, to whom he preached then, by telling them, *that he knew they should see his face no more.*

This that St. Paul says, he says to the Ephesians; but not at Ephesus: he was departed from thence the year before: for, upon the news that Claudius the Emperor, who persecuted the Christians, was dead, he purposed to go by Jerusalem to Rome. In that peregrination and visitation of his, his way fell out after to be by Miletus, a place not far from Ephesus; *He was bound in the Spirit*, as he says here, *to go to Jerusalem*[22]; and therefore he could not visit them at Ephesus. A man may have such obliga-

[21] Phil. ii. 17. [22] Ver. 22.

tions, even for the service of God upon him, as that it shall not be in his power, to do that service which he may owe, and desire to pay in some particular church. It was in part St. Paul's case: but yet he did what he could; from Miletus he sent to Ephesus[23], to call the elders of that church thither; and then he preached this short, but powerful sermon. And, as his manner ever was, (though still without prevaricating or forbearing to denounce the judgments of God upon them, in cases necessary) to make those whom he preached or writ to, as benevolent, and well-affected to him as he could, (for he was *Omnia omnibus, Made all things to all men*) to which purpose it is that he speaks, and pours out himself, with such a loving thankfulness to the Galatians, *Ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus himself*[24]; pursuing, I say, this manner of a mutual endearing, and a reciprocal embowelling of himself in the congregation, and the congregation in him, (as, certainly, if we consider all unions, the natural union of parents and children, the matrimonial union of husband and wife, no union is so spiritual, nor so near to that, by which we are made *Idem spiritus cum Domino*, The same spirit with the Lord, as when a good pastor, and a good flock meet, and are united in holy affections to one another) to unite himself to his Ephesians inseparably, even after his separation, to be still present with them, in his everlasting absence, and to live with them even after death, to make the deeper impressions of all his past, and present instructions, he speaks to them as a dying man, *I know you shall see my face no more.*

Why did he so? St. Paul did not die in eleven years after this: but he died to them, for bodily presence, now; they were to see him no more. As the day of my death is the day of judgment to me, so this day of his departing was the day of his death to them. And for himself, from this time, when he gave this judgment of death upon himself, all the rest of his life was but a leading far off, to the place of execution. For first, very soon after this, Agabus gave him notice of manifold afflictions, in that girdle which we spake of before. There he was bound, and imprisoned at Jerusalem; from thence sent bound to Cæsarea; practised upon to be killed by the way; forced to appeal to

[23] Ver. 17. [24] Gal. iv. 14.

Cæsar; upon that appeal sent prisoner to Rome; shipwrecked upon the way at Malta; imprisoned under guard, though not close prisoner, two years after his coming thither; and, though dismissed, and so enabled to visit some churches, yet laid hold upon again by Nero, and executed. So that as it was literally true, that the Ephesians never saw his face, after this valediction, so he may be said to have died then, in such a sense, as himself says to the Corinthians, *That some men were baptized, Pro mortuis, for dead*[25], that is, as good as dead, past all hope of recovery. So he died then.

Now beloved, who hath seen a father, or a friend, or a neighbour, or a malefactor die, and hath not been affected with his dying words? *Nay Father Abraham*, says Dives, that will not serve, *That they have Moses and the prophets*[26]; sermons will not serve their turns; *but if one went to them from the dead, they would repent.* And the nearest to this is, if one speak to them that is going to the dead. If he had been a minute in heaven thou wouldst believe him; and wilt thou not believe him a minute before? Did not Jacob observe the angels ascending, as well as descending upon that ladder? Trust a good soul going to God, as well as coming from God? And then, as our casuists say, That whatsoever a man is bound to do, *In articulo mortis*, at the point of death, by way of confession or otherwise, he is bound to do, when he comes to the sacrament, or when he undertakes any action of danger, because then he should prepare himself as if he were dying: so, when you come to hear us here, who are come from God, hear us with such an affection, as if we were going to God, as if you heard us upon our death-beds. The pulpit is more than our death-bed; for we are bound to the same truth, and sincerity here, as if we were upon our death-bed, and then God's ordinance is more expressly executed here, than there. He that mingles falsehood with his last dying words, deceives the world inexcusably, because he speaks in the person of an honest man, but he that mingles false informations in his preaching, does so much more, because he speaks in the person of God himself.

They to whom St. Paul spake there, are said all *to have wept*,

[25] 1 Cor. xv, 29. [26] Luke xvi. 30.

*and to have fallen on Paul's neck, and to have kissed him;* but it is added, *they sorrowed most of all for those words, that they should see his face no more.* When any of those men, to whom for their holy calling, and their religious pains in their calling, you owe and pay a reverence, are taken from you by death, or otherwise, there is a godly sorrow due to that, and in a great proportion. In the death of one Elisha, King Joash apprehended a ruin of all; *He wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*[27]; he lost the solicitude of a father, he lost the power and strength of the kingdom, in the loss of one such prophet. But when you have so sorrowed for men, upon whom your devotion hath put, and justly put such a valuation, remember that a greater loss, than the loss of a thousand such men may fall upon you. Consider the difference between the candle and the candlestick, between the preacher of the Gospel, and the Gospel itself; between a religious man, and religion itself: the removing of the candlestick, and the withdrawing of the Gospel, and the profaning of religion, is infinitely a greater loss, than if hundreds of the present labourers should be taken away from us. *The children of the kingdom may be cast into utter darkness*[28]; and *that kingdom may be given to others, which shall bring forth the fruits thereof*[29]; and, *The Lord may come, and come quickly and remove our candlestick out of his place*[30]; pray we that in our days he may not. And truly where God threatens to do so in the Revelation, it is upon a church, of which God himself gives good testimony, the church of Ephesus; of her *labours*, that is, preaching; of her *patience*, that is, suffering; of her *impatience*, her not suffering the evil, that is, her integrity and impartiality, without connivance or toleration; and of her *not fainting*, that is, perseverance; and of her *hating the Nicolaitans*, that is, sincerity in the truth, and a holy animosity against all false doctrines: and yet, says he, *I have something to say against thee.*

When thou hast testified their assiduity in preaching, their constancy in suffering, their sincerity in believing, their integrity

[27] 2 Kings xiii. 14. [28] Matt. viii. 12.
[29] Matt. xxi. 43. [30] Rev. ii. 5.

in professing, their perseverance in continuing, their zeal in hating of all error in others, when thou thyself hast given this evidence in their behalf, canst thou Lord Jesu have anything to say against them? What then shall we, we that fail in all these, look to hear from thee? What was their crime? *Because they had left their first love;* left the fulness of their former zeal to God's cause. Now, if our case be so much worse than theirs, as that we are not only guilty of all those sins, of which Christ discharges them, and have not only left our first love, but in a manner lost all our love, all our zeal to his glory, and be come to a lukewarmness in his service, and a general neglect of the means of grace, how justly may we fear, not only that he will come, and come quickly, but that he may possibly be upon his way already, to remove our candlestick, and withdraw the Gospel from us? And if it be a sad thing to you, to hear a Paul, a holy man say, *You shall see my face no more*, on this side the *Ite maledicti, Go ye accursed into hell-fire*, there cannot be so sad a voice, as to hear Christ Jesus say, *You shall see my face no more. Facies Dei est, qua Deus nobis innotescit*, says St. Augustine, That is the face of God to us, by which God manifests himself to us. God manifests himself to us in the word, and in the sacraments. If we see not them in their true lines and colours, (the word and sacraments sincerely and religiously preached and administered) we do not see them, but masks upon them; and, if we do not see them, we do not see the face of Christ; and I could as well stand under his *Nescio vos*, which he said to the negligent virgins, *I know you not*, or his *Nescivi vos*, which he said to those that boast of their works, *I never knew you*, as under this fearful thunder from his mouth, *You shall see my face no more*[31], I will absolutely withdraw, or I will suffer profaneness to enter into those means of your salvation, word, and sacraments, which I have so long continued in their sincerity towards you, and you have so long abused.

Blessed God say not so to us yet; yet let the tree grow another year, before thou cut it down; and as thou hast digged about it, by bringing judgments upon our neighbours, so water it with thy

[31] Matt. vii. 22.

former rain, the dew of thy grace, and with thy latter rain, the tears of our contrition, that we may still see thy face; here and hereafter; here, in thy kingdom of grace; hereafter in thy kingdom of glory, which thou hast purchased for us, with the inestimable price of thine incorruptible blood. *Amen.*

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## SERMON XLVI.

*PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S IN THE EVENING, UPON THE DAY OF ST. PAUL'S CONVERSION.* 1628.

Acts xxviii. 6.

They changed their minds, and said, That he was a god.

The scene, where this canonization, this super-canonization, (for it was not of a saint, but of a god) was transacted, was the isle of Malta: the person canonized, and proclaimed for a god, was St. Paul, at that time by shipwreck cast upon that island. And having for some years heretofore continued that custom in this place, at this time of the year, when the church celebrates the conversion of St. Paul, (as it doth this day) to handle some part of his story, pursuing that custom now, I chose that part, which is knit and wound up in this text, then *they changed their minds, and said, He is a god.* St. Paul found himself in danger of being oppressed in judgment, and thereby was put to a necessity of appealing to Cæsar; by virtue of that appeal being sent to Rome, by sea, he was surprised with such storms, as threatened inevitable ruin; but the angel of God stood by him, and assured him, that none of those two hundred and seventy-six persons, which were in the ship with him, should perish; according to this assurance, though the ship perished, all the passengers were saved, and recovered this land, Malta. Where being courteously received by the inhabitants, though otherwise *barbarians*, St. Paul doing so much for himself and for his company, as to gather a bundle of sticks to mend the fire, there flew a viper from the

heat, and fastened on his hand. They thereupon said among themselves, *No doubt, this man is a murderer, whom, though he have escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.* But when he shaked off the viper into the fire, and received no harm, and they had looked, that he should have swollen, and fallen down dead suddenly, after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, *Then* (and then enters our text) *they changed their minds, and said, he is a god.* Almighty God had bred up St. Paul so; so he had catechised him all the way, with vicissitudes, and revolutions from extreme to extreme. He had taught him how to want, and how to abound; how to bear honour, and dishonour: he permitted an angel of Satan to buffet him, (so he gave him some sense of hell) he gave him a rapture, an ecstasy, and in that, an appropinquation, an approximation to himself, and so some possession of heaven in this life. So God proceeded with him here in Malta too; he passed him in their mouths from extreme to extreme; a viper seizes him, and they condemn him for a *murderer;* he shakes off the viper, and they change their minds, and say, *He is a god.*

The first words of our text carry us necessarily so far back, as to see from what they changed; and their periods are easily seen; their *terminus à quo*, and their *terminus ad quem*, were these; first, that he was a *murderer*, then that he was a *god.* An error in morality; they censure deeply upon light evidence: an error in divinity; they transfer the name and estimation of a god, upon an unknown man. Place both the errors in divinity; (so you may justly do) and then there is an error in charity, a hasty and inconsiderate condemning; and an error in faith, a superstitious creating of an imaginary god. Now, upon these two general considerations will this exercise consist; first, that it is natural logic, an argumentation naturally imprinted in man, to argue, and conclude thus, Great calamities are inflicted, therefore God is greatly provoked; these men of Malta were but natural men, but *barbarians*, (as St. Luke calls them) and yet they argue, and conclude so; here is a judgment executed, therefore here is evidence, that God is displeased. And so far they kept within the limits of humanity and piety too; but when they descended hastily and inconsiderately, to particular, and personal

applications, this judgment upon this man is an evidence of his guiltiness in this offence, then they transgressed the bounds of charity; that because a viper had seized Paul's hand, Paul must needs be a murderer.

And then when we shall have passed those things, which belong to that first consideration, which consists of these two propositions, that to conclude so, God strikes, therefore he is angry, is natural, but hastily to apply this to the condemnation of particular persons, is uncharitable, we shall descend to our second consideration, to see what they did, when they changed their minds, *They said, he is a god.* And, as in the former part, we shall have seen, that there is in man a natural logic, but that strays into uncharitableness; so in this we shall see, that there is in man a natural religion, but that strays into superstition and idolatry; naturally man is so far from being divested of the knowledge and sense of God, from thinking that there is no God, as that he is apt to make more gods than he should, and to worship them for gods, whom he should not. These men of Malta were but natural men, but *barbarians*, (says St. Luke) yet they were so far from denying God, as that they multiplied gods, and because the viper did Paul no harm, they changed their minds, and said, *He is a god.*

And from these two general considerations, and these two branches in each, that there is in man a natural logic, but that strays into fallacies; and a natural religion, but that strays into idolatry, and superstition, we shall derive, and deduce unto you, such things as we conceive most to conduce to your edification, from this knot, and summary abridgment of this story, *Then they changed their minds, and said, he is a god.*

First then for the first proposition of our first part, that this is natural logic, an argumentation imprinted in every man, God strikes, therefore God is angry, he, whom they that even hate his name, (our adversaries of the Roman persuasion) do yet so far tacitly reverence, as that, though they will not name him, they will transfer, and insert his expositions of Scriptures, into their works, and pass them as their own, that as Calvin, he, Calvin, collects this proposition from this story, *Passim receptum omnibus sæculis*, in all ages, and in all places this hath ever been acknow-

ledged by all men, That when God strikes, God is angry, and when God is angry, God strikes; and therefore, says he, *Quoties occurrit memorabilis aliqua calamitas, simul in mentem veniat*, As often as you see any extraordinary calamity, conclude that God hath been extraordinarily provoked, and hasten to those means, by which the anger and indignation of God may be appeased again. So that for this doctrine, a man needs not be preached unto, a man needs not be catechised; a man needs not read the fathers, nor the councils, nor the schoolmen, nor the ecclesiastical story, nor summists, nor casuists, nor canonists, no, nor the Bible itself for this doctrine; for this doctrine, That when God strikes he is angry, and when he is angry he strikes, the natural man hath as full a library in his bosom, as the Christian.

We, we that are Christians have one author of ours, that tells us, *Vindicta mihi, Revenge is mine, saith the Lord*[1]; Moses tells us so; and in that, we have a first and a second lesson; first, that since revenge is in God's hands, it will certainly fall upon the malefactor, God does not mistake his mark; and then, since revenge is in his hands, no man must take revenge out of his hands, or make himself his own magistrate, or revenge his own quarrel. And as we, we that are Christians, have our author, Moses, that tells us this, the natural man hath his secular author, Theocritus, that tells him as much, *Reperit Deus nocentes*, God always finds out the guilty man. In which, the natural man hath also a first, and a second lesson too; first, that since God finds out the malefactor, he never escapes; and then, since God does find him at last, God sought him all the while; though God strike late, yet he pursued him long before; and many a man feels the sting in his conscience, long before he feels the blow in his body. That God finds, and therefore seeks, that God overtakes, and therefore pursues, that God overthrows, and therefore resists the wicked, is a natural conclusion as well as a divine.

The same author of ours, Moses, tell us, *The Lord our God is Lord of lords, and God of gods, and regardeth no man's person*[2]. The natural man hath his author too, that tells him, *Semper virgines furiæ*, The furies, (they whom they conceive to execute revenge upon malefactors) are always virgins, that is, not to be

[1] Deut. xxxii. 35. [2] Deut. x. 17.

corrupted by any solicitations. That no dignity shelters a man from the justice of God, is a natural conclusion, as well as a divine. We have a sweet singer of Israel that tells us, *Non dimidiabit dies, The bloody and deceitful man shall not live out half his days*[3]: and the natural man hath his sweet singer too, a learned poet that tells him, that seldom any enormous malefactor enjoys *Siccam mortem*, (as he calls it) A dry, an unbloody death. That blood requires blood, is a natural conclusion, as well as a divine. Our sweet singer tells us again, *That if he fly to the farthest ends of the earth, or to the sea, or to heaven, or to hell, he shall find God there;* and the natural man hath his author, that tells him, *Qui fugit, non effugit*, He that runs away from God, does not escape God. That there is no sanctuary, no privileged place against which God's *Quo warranto* does not lie, is a natural conclusion, as well as a divine; *sanguis Abel*, is our proverb, *that Abel's blood cries for revenge*, and *sanguis Æsopi* is the natural man's proverb, that Æsop's blood cries for revenge; for Æsop's blood was shed upon an indignation taken at sacrifice, as Abel's was. St. Paul's *Deus remunerator*, that there is *a God*, and that that God *is a just rewarder of men's actions*, is a natural conclusion, as well as a divine.

When God speaks to us, us that are Christians, in the Scriptures, he speaks as in a primitive, and original language; when he speaks to the natural man, by the light of nature, though he speak as in a translation into another language, yet he speaks the same thing; everywhere he offers us this knowledge, that where he strikes, he is angry, and where he is angry, he does strike. Therefore Calvin might, as he doth, safely and piously establish his *Quoties occurrit*, as often as you see an extraordinary calamity, conclude that God is extraordinarily provoked: and he might as safely have established more than that, that wheresoever God is angry, and in that anger strikes, God sees sin before; no punishment from God, where there is no sin. God may have glory in the condemnation of man; but except that man were a sinful man, God could have no glory in his condemnation. *At the beginning of thy prayer, the commandment went out*, says Gabriel to Daniel[4]; but till Daniel prayed, there went out no com-

[3] Psal. LV. 23. [4] Dan. ix. 23.

mandment. At the beginning of the sinner's sin, God bends his bow, and whets his arrows, and at last he shoots: but if there were no sin in me, God had no mark to shoot at; for God hates not me, nor anything that he hath made.

And further we carry not your consideration upon this first branch of our first part, naturally man hath this logic, to conclude. where God strikes, God is angry; when God is angry, he will strike; but God never strikes in such anger, but with relation to sin. These men of Malta, natural men, did so, and erred not in so doing; they erred when they came to particulars, to hasty and inconsiderate applications. for that is uncharitableness, and constitutes our second branch of this part.

When one of the consuls of Rome, Caninius, died the same day that he was made consul, Cicero would needs pass a jest upon that accident, and say, The state had had a vigilant consul of Caninius, a watchful consul, because he never slept in all his consulship; for he died before he went to bed. But this was justly thought a fault in Cicero, for calamities are not the subject of jests; they are not so casual things. But yet, though they come from a sure hand, they are not always evidences of God's displeasure upon that man upon whom they fall. That was the issue between Job and his friends[5]; they relied upon that, pursued that which they had laid down, *Remember, whoever perished being innocent, or where were the righteous cut off?* Job relied upon that, pursued that which he had laid down; *If I justify myself, my own words shall condemn me*[6]; (self-justification is a self-condemnation) *If I say I am perfect, that also shall prove me perverse*, say Job (no man is so far from purity and perfection, as he that thinks himself perfect and pure,) but yet, says he there, *Though I were perfect, this is one thing, and therefore I say it, God destroyeth the perfect and wicked.* God's outward proceeding with a man in this world, is no evidence to another, what he intends him in the next. In no case? In no case, (on this side of revelation) for the world to come. Till I be a judge of that man's person and actions, and being his judge have clear evidence, and be not misled by rumours from others, by passion, and prejudices in myself, I must pass no judgment upon him, in this

[5] Job. iv. 7. [6] Job ix. 20.

world, nor say, this fell upon him for this crime. But whatsoever my capacity be, or whatsoever the evidence, I must suspend my judgment for the world to come. Therefore says the apostle, *Judge nothing before the time*[7]: when is the time? When I am made judge, and when I have clear evidence, then is the time to pass my judgment for this world; but for a final condemnation in the world to come, the apostle expresses himself fully in that place, *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of the heart.*

It was a wise and a pious counsel that Gamaliel gave that state[8], *Abstinete*, Forbear a while, give God sea-room, give him his latitude, and you may find, that you mistook at first; for God hath divers ends in inflicting calamities, and he that judges hastily, may soon mistake God's purpose. It is a remarkable expressing which the Holy Ghost has put into the mouth of Naomi, *Call not me Naomi*, says she there[9]; Naomi is lovely, and loving, and beloved; *But call me Mara*, says she, Mara is bitterness: But why so? *For*, says she, *The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me:* bitterly, and very bitterly. But yet so he hath with many that he loves full well. It is true, says Naomi, but there is more in my case than so; *The Almighty hath afflicted me, and the Lord hath testified against me;* Testified, there is my misery; that is, done enough, given evidence enough for others to believe, and to ground a judgment upon it, that he hath abandoned me utterly, forsaken me for ever. Yet God meant well to Naomi for all this testification, and howsoever others might misinterpret God's proceeding with her.

That *ostracism* which was practised amongst the Athenians, and that *petalism* which was practised amongst the Syracusans, by which laws, the most eminent, and excellent persons in those states were banished, not for any crime imputed to them, nor for any popular practices set on foot by them, but to conserve a parity, and equality in that state, this *ostracism*, this *petalism*, was not without good use in those governments. If God will lay heaviest calamities upon the best men, if God will exercise an

[7] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [8] Acts v. 33. [9] Ruth i. 19.

*ostracism*, a *petalism* in his state, who shall search into his *arcana imperii*, into the secrets of his government? who shall ask a reason of his actions? who shall doubt of a good end in all his ways? Our Saviour Christ hath shut up that way of rash judgment upon such occasions, when he says, *Suppose ye, that those Galileans whom Herod slew, or those eighteen men whom the fall of the tower of Siloam slew, were greater sinners than the rest*[10]? It is not safely, it is not charitably concluded. And therefore he carries their thoughts as far on the other side, that he that suffered a calamity, was not only not the greatest, but no sinner; for so Christ says, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*[11]; (speaking of the man that was born blind). Not that he, or his parents had not sinned; but that that calamity was not laid upon him, in contemplation of any sin, but only for an occasion of the manifestation of Christ's divinity, in the miraculous recovery of that blind man. Therefore says Luther excellently, and elegantly, *Non judicandum de cruce, secundum prædicamentum quantitatis, sed relationis;* We must not judge of a calamity, by the predicament of quantity, how great that calamity is, but by the predicament of relation, to what God refers that calamity, and what he intends in it; For, *Deus ultionem Deus*, (as St. Hierome reads that place[12]) *God is the God of revenge*, and, *Deus ultionum libere agit*, This God of revenge, revenges at his own liberty, when, and where, and how it pleases him.

And therefore, as we are bound to make good constructions of those corrections that God lays upon us, so are we to make good interpretations of those judgments which he casts upon others. First, for ourselves, that which is said in St. Matthew, *That at the day of judgment shall appear in heaven, the sign of the Son of man*[13], is frequently, ordinarily received by the fathers, to be intended of the cross; That before Christ himself appear, his sign, the cross shall appear in the clouds. Now, this is not literally so, in the text, nor is it necessarily deduced, but ordinarily by the ancients it is so accepted, and though the sign of the Son of man, may be some other thing, yet of this sign, the cross, there may be this good application, that when God affords thee, this manifes-

[10] Luke xiii. 2. [11] John ix. 3. [12] Psalm xciii. 1.
[13] Matt. xxiv. 30.

festation of his cross, in the participation of those crosses and calamities that he suffered here, when thou hast this sign of the Son of man upon thee, conclude to thyself that the Son of man Christ Jesus is coming towards thee; and as thou hast the sign, thou shalt have the substance, as thou hast his cross, thou shalt have his glory. For, this is that which the apostle intends; *Unto you it is given*, (not laid upon you as a punishment, but given you as a benefit) *not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer for Christ*[14]. Where, the apostle seems to make our crosses a kind of assurance, as well as our faith; for so he argues, *Not only to believe, but to suffer;* for, howsoever faith be a full evidence, yet our suffering is a new seal even upon that faith. And an evident seal, a conspicuous, a glorious seal. *Quid gloriosus, quam collegam Christi in passione factum fuisse*[15]? What can be more glorious, than to have been made a colleague, a partner with Christ in his sufferings, and to have fulfilled his sufferings in my flesh. For that is the highest degree, which we can take in Christ's school, as St. Denys the Areopagite expresses it, *A Deo doctus, non solum divina discit, sed divina patitur*, (which we may well translate, or accommodate thus,) He that is thoroughly taught by Christ, does not only believe all that Christ says, but conforms him to all that Christ did, and is ready to suffer as Christ suffered. Truly, if it were possible to fear any defect of joy in heaven, all that could fall into my fear would be but this, that in heaven I can no longer express my love by suffering for my God, for my Saviour. A greater joy cannot enter into my heart than this, to suffer for him that suffered for me. As God saw that way prosper in the hands of Absalom, he sent for Joab, and Joab came not[16], he came not when he sent a second time, but when he sent messengers to burn up his corn, then Joab came, and then he complied with Absalom, and seconded and accomplished his desires: so God calls us in his own outward ordinances, and, a second time in his temporal blessings, and we come not; but we come the sooner, if he burn our corn, if he draw us by afflicting us.

Now, as we are able to argue thus in our own cases, and in our own behalfs, as when a vehement calamity lies upon me, I can

[14] Phil. i. 29. [15] Cyprian. [16] 2 Sam. xiv. 30.

plead out of God's precedents, and out of his method be able to say, This will not last: David was not ten years in banishment, but he enjoyed the kingdom forty[17]: God will recompense my hours of sorrow, with days of joy; if the calamity be both vehement and long, yet I can say with his blessed servant Augustine, *Et cum blandiris pater es, et pater es cum cædis*, I feel the hand of a father upon me when thou strokest me, and when thou strikest me, I feel the hand of a father too, *Blandiris ne deficiam, cædis ne peream*, I know thy meaning when thou strokest me, it is, lest I should faint under thy hand, and I know thy meaning when thou strikest me, it is, lest I should not know thy hand; If the weight, and continuation of this calamity testify against me, (as Naomi said) that is, give others occasion to think, and to speak ill of me, as of a man, for some secret sins, forsaken of God, still Nazianzen's refuge is my refuge, *Hoc mihi commentor*, This is my meditation, *Si falsa objicit convitiator, non me attingit*, If that which mine enemy says of me, be false, it concerns not me, he cannot mean me, it is not I that he speaks of, I am no such man; And then, *Si vera dicit*, If that which he says be true, it begun not to be true, then when he said it, but was true when I did it; and therefore I must blame myself for doing, not him for speaking it; If I can argue thus in mine own case, and in mine own behalf, and not suspect God's absence from me, because he lays calamities upon me, let me be also as charitable towards another, and not conclude ill, upon ill accidents; for there is nothing so ill, out of which, God, and a godly man cannot draw good. When John Huss was at the stake to be burnt, his eye fixed upon a poor plain country fellow, whom he observed to be busier than the rest, and to run oftener, to fetch more and more fagots to burn him, and he said thereupon no more but this, *O sancta simplicitas!* O holy simplicity! He meant that that man, being then under an invincible ignorance, misled by that zeal, thought he did God service in burning him. But such an interpretation will hardly be appliable to any of these hasty and inconsiderate judges of other men, that give way to their own passion; for zeal, and uncharitableness are incompatible things; zeal and uncharitableness cannot consist together:

[17] 2 Sam. v. 4.

and there was evident uncharitableness in these men of Malta's proceeding, when, because the viper seized his hand, they condemned him for *a murderer*.

It is true, they saw a concurrence of circumstances, and that is always more weighty, than single evidence. They saw a man who had been near drowning; yet he escaped that. They saw he had gathered a bundle of sticks, in which the viper was enwrapped, and yet did him no harm when it was in his hand; he escaped that. And then they saw that viper dart itself out of the fire again, and of all the company fasten upon that man. What should they think of that man? In God's name, what they would, to the advancement of God's glory. They might justly have thought that God was working upon that man, and had some great work to do upon that man. We put no stop to zeal; we only tell you, where zeal determines; where uncharitableness enters, zeal goes out, and passion counterfeits that zeal. God seeks no glory out of the uncharitable condemning of another man. And then, in this proceeding of these men, we justly note the slipperiness, the precipitation, the bottomlessness of uncharitableness, in judgment; they could consist nowhere, till they charged him with murder, *Surely he is a murderer*. Many crimes there were, and those capital, and such as would have induced death, on this side of murder, but they stopped at none, till they came to the worst. And truly it is easy to be observed, in the ways of this world, that when men have once conceived an uncharitable opinion against another man, they are apt to believe from others, apt to imagine in themselves any kind of ill, of that man; sometimes so much, and so falsely, as makes even that which is true, the less credible. For, when passionate men will load a man with all, sad and equitable men begin to doubt whether any be true; and a malefactor escapes sometimes by being overcharged.

But I move not out of mine own sphere; my sphere is your edification, upon this centre, the proceeding of these men of Malta with St. Paul; upon them, and upon you I look directly, and I look only, without any glance, any reflection upon any other object. And therefore having said enough of those two branches which constitute our first part, that to argue out of God's

judgments, his displeasure, is natural, but then that natural logic should determine in the zeal of advancing God's glory, and not stray into an uncharitable condemning of particular persons, because in this uncharitableness there is such a slipperiness, such a precipitation, such a bottomlessness, as that these hasty censurers could stop nowhere till they came to the highest charge; having said enough of this, we pass, in our order, to our second part, to that which they did; when they changed their minds, *They changed their minds, and said he was a god.*

In this second part we consider first, the incongruity of depending upon anything in this world; for all will change. Men have considered usefully the incongruity of building the Tower of Babel, in this, that to have erected a tower that should have carried that height that they intended in that, the whole body of the earth, the whole globe, and substance thereof would not have served for a basis, for a foundation to that tower. If all the timber of all the forests in the world, all the quarries of stones, all the mines of lead and iron had been laid together, nay if all the earth and sea had been petrified, and made one stone, all would not have served for a basis, for a foundation of that tower; from whence then must they have had their materials for all the superedifications? So to establish a trust, a confidence, such an acquiescence as a man may rely upon, all this world affords not a basis, a foundation; for everything in this world is fluid, and transitory, and sandy, and all dependance, all assurance built upon this world, is but a building upon sand; all will change. It is true, that a fair reputation, a good opinion of men, is, though not a foundation to build upon, yet a fair stone in the building, and such a stone, as every man is bound to provide himself of. For, for the most part, most men are such, as most men take them to be; *Neminem omnes, nemo omnes fefellit;* All the world never joined to deceive one man, nor was ever any one man able to deceive all the world. *Contemptu famæ contemnuntur et virtutes*, was so well said by Tacitus, as it is pity St. Augustine said it not; They that neglect the good opinion of others, neglect those virtues that should produce that good opinion. Therefore St. Hierome protests to abhor that *Paratum de trivio*, as he calls it, That vulgar, that street, that dunghill language, *satis mihi*, as

long as mine own conscience reproaches me of nothing, I care not what all the world says. We must care what the world says, and study that they may say well of us. But when they do, though this be a fair stone in the wall, it is no foundation to build upon, for, *they change their minds.*

Who do? our text does not tell us who; the story does not tell us, of what quality and condition these men of Malta were, who are here said *to have changed their minds.* Likeliest they are to have been of the vulgar, the ordinary, the inferior sort of people, because they are likeliest to have flocked and gathered together upon this occasion of Paul's shipwreck upon that island. And that kind of people are always justly thought to be most subject to this levity, *to change their minds.* The greatest poet lays the greatest levity and change that can be laid, to this kind of people; that is, *In contraria*, That they change even from one extreme to another; *Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus.* Where that poet does not only mean, that the people will be of divers opinions from one another; for, for the most part they are not so; for the most part they think, and wish, and love, and hate together; and they do all by example, as others do, and upon no other reason, but therefore, because others do. Neither was that poet ever bound up by his words, that he should say *In contraria*, because a milder, or more modified word would not stand in his verse; but he said it, because it is really true, the people will change into contrary opinions; and whereas an angel itself cannot pass from east to west, from extreme to extreme, without touching upon the way between, the people will pass from extreme to extreme, without any middle opinion; last minute's murderer, is this minute's god, and in an instant, Paul, whom they sent to be judged in hell, is made a judge in heaven. The people will change. *In the multitude of people is the king's honour*[18]; and therefore Joab made that prayer in the behalf of David, *The Lord thy God add unto thy people, how many soever they be, a hundred fold*[19]. But when David came to number his people with a confidence in their number, God took away the ground of that confidence, and lessened their number seventy thousand in three days. Therefore as David could say, *I will not*

[18] Prov. xiv. 28. [19] 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.

*be afraid of ten thousand men*[20]. so he should say, I will not confide in ten thousand men, though multiplied: for they will change, and at such an ebb, the popular man will lie, as a whale upon the sands, deserted by the tide. We find in the Roman story, many examples (particularly in Commodus' time, upon Cleander, principal gentleman of his chamber) of severe executions upon men that have courted the people, though in a way of charity, and giving them corn in a time of dearth, or upon like occasions. There is danger in getting them, occasioned by jealousy of others, there is difficulty in holding them, by occasion of levity in themselves; therefore we must say with the prophet, *Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord*[21]. For *they*, the people, *will change their minds.*

But yet there is nothing in our text, that binds us to fix this levity upon the people only. The text does not say, That there was none of the princes of the people, no commanders, no magistrates present at this accident, and partners in this levity. Neither is it likely, but that in such a place as Malta, an island, some persons of quality and command resided about the coast, to receive and to give intelligence, and directions upon all emergent occasions of danger, and that some such were present at this accident, and gave their voice both ways, in the exclamation, and in the acclamation, That he was *a murderer*, and that he was *a god.* For, *they will change their minds;* all, high as well as low, will change. A good statesman Polybius says, That the people are naturally as the sea; naturally smooth, and calm, and still, and even; but then naturally apt to be moved by influences of superior bodies; and so the people apt to change by them who have a power over their affections, or a power over their wills. So says he, the sea is apt to be moved by storms and tempests; and so, the people are apt to change with rumours and windy reports. So, the sea is moved, so the people are changed, says Polybius. But Polybius might have carried his politic consideration higher than the sea, to the air too; and applied it higher than to the people, to greater persons; for the air is shaked and transported with vapours and exhalations, as much as the sea

[20] Psal. iii. 6. [21] Jer. xvii. 5.

with winds and storms; and great men as much changed with ambitions in themselves, and flatteries from others, as inferior people with influences, and impressions from them. All change their minds; high, as well as low, will change. But *I am the Lord; I change not*[22]. I, and only I have that immunity, immutability; and therefore, says God there, *Ye sons of Jacob are not consumed;* therefore, because I, I who cannot change have loved you; for they, who depend upon their love, who can change, are in a woful condition. And that involves all; all can, all will, all do change, high and low.

Therefore, *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man*[23]. What man? Any man. *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes*[24]. Which David thought worth the repeating; for he says it again, *Put not your trust in princes*[25]. Not that you may not trust their royal words, and gracious promises to you; not that you may not trust their counsels, and executions of those counsels, and the distribution of your contributions for those executions; not that you may not trust the managing of affairs of state in their hands, without jealous inquisitions, or suspicious mis-interpretations of their actions. In these you must trust princes, and those great persons whom princes trust; but when these great persons are in the balance with God, there they weigh as little, as less men. Nay, as David hath ranked and disposed them, less; for thus he conveys that consideration, *Surely men of low degree are vanity*[26]; that is sure enough; there is little doubt of that: men of low degree can profit us nothing; they cannot pretend or promise to do us good; but then says David there, *Men of high degree are a lie;* they pretend a power, and a purpose to do us good, and then disappoint us. Many times men cannot, many times men will not; neither can we find in any but God himself, a constant power, and a constant will, upon which we may rely: the men of Malta, of what rank soever they were, did; all men, low and high, will change their minds.

Neither have these men of Malta (consider them in what quality you will) so much honour afforded them, in the original,

[22] Mal. iii. 6. [23] Psal. cxviii. 8. [24] Ver. 9.
[25] Psal. cLxvi. 3. [26] Psal. Lxii. 9.

as our translation hath given them. We say, *They changed their minds;* the original says only this, *They changed*, and no more. Alas, they, we, men of this world, worms of this dunghill, whether basilisks or blind-worms, whether scarabs or silk-worms, whether high or low in the world, have no minds to change. The Platonic philosophers did not only acknowledge *animam in homine*, a soul in man, but *mentem in anima*, a mind in the soul of man. They meant by the mind, the superior faculties of the soul, and we never come to exercise them. Men and women call one another inconstant, and accuse one another of having changed their minds, when, God knows, they have but changed the object of their eye, and seen a better white or red. An old man loves not the same sports that he did when he was young, nor a sick man the same meats that he did when he was well: but these men have not changed their minds; the old man hath changed his fancy, and the sick man his taste; neither his mind.

The mind implies consideration, deliberation, conclusion upon premises; and we never come to that; we never put the soul home; we never bend the soul up to her height; we never put her to a trial what she is able to do towards discerning a temptation, what towards resisting a temptation, what towards repenting a temptation; we never put her to trial what she is able to do by her natural faculties, whether by them she cannot be as good as a Plato, or a Socrates, who had no more but those natural faculties; what by virtue of God's general grace, which is that providence, in which he enwraps all his creatures, whether by that she cannot know her God, as well as the ox knows his crib, and the stork her nest; what by virtue of those particular graces, which God offers her in his private inspirations at home, and in his public ordinances here, whether by those she cannot be as good an hour hence, as she is now: and as good a day after, as that day she receives the sacrament; we never put the soul home, we never bend the soul up to her height; and the extent of the soul is this mind. When David speaks of the people, he says, *They imagine a vain thing*[87]; it goes no farther, than to the fancy, to the imagination; it never comes so near the mind, as consideration, reflection, examination, they only imagine, fancy a vain thing,

[87] Psal. ii. 2.

which is but a waking dream, for the fancy is the seat, the scene, the theatre of dreams. When David speaks there of greater persons, it carries it farther than so, but yet not to the mind; *The rulers take counsel*, says David; but not of the mind, not of rectified and religious reason; but, *They take counsel together*, says he; that is, of one another; they sit still and hearken what the rest will do, and they will do accordingly. Now, this is but a herding, it is not an union; this is for the most part, a following of affections, and passions, which are the inferior servants of the soul, and not of that, which we understand here by the mind, the deliberate resolutions, and executions of the superior faculties thereof.

*They changed*, says our text; not their minds; there is no evidence, no appearance, that they exercised any, that they had any; but they changed their passions. Nay, they have not so much honour, as that afforded them in the original; for it is not *They changed*, but *They were changed*, passively; men subject to the transportation of passion, do nothing of themselves, but are merely passive; and being possessed with a spirit of fear, or a spirit of ambition, as those spirits move them, in a minute their yea is nay, their smile is a frown, their light is darkness, their good is evil, their murderer is a god. These men of Malta changed, not their minds, but their passions, and so did not change advisedly, but passionately were changed, and in that distemper, they said, *He is a god.*

In this hasty acclamation of theirs, *He is a god*, we are come to that which was our principal intention in this part, That as man hath in him a natural logic, but that strays into fallacies, in uncharitable judgments, so man hath in him a natural religion, but that strays into idolatry, and superstition. The men of Malta were but mere natural men, and yet were so far from denying God, as that they multiplied gods to themselves. The soul of man brings with it, into the body, a sense and an acknowledgment of God; neither can all the abuses that the body puts upon the soul, whilst they dwell together, (which are infinite) divest that acknowledgment, or extinguish that sense of God in the soul. And therefore by what several names soever the old heathen philosophers called their gods, still they meant all the

same God. Chrysippus presented God to the world, in the notion and apprehension of *Divina necessitas*, That a certain divine necessity which lay upon everything, that everything must necessarily be thus and thus done, that that necessity was God; and this, others have called by another name, destiny. Zeno presented God to the world, in the notion and apprehension of *Divina lex;* That it was not a constraint, a necessity, but a divine law, an ordinance, and settled course for the administration of all things; and this law was Zeno's God; and this, others have called by another name, Nature. The Brachmans, which are the priests in the East, they present God, in the notion and apprehension of *Divina lux*, That light is God; in which, they express themselves, not to mean the fire, (which some natural men worshipped for God) nor the sun, (which was worshipped by more) but by their light, they mean that light, by which man is enabled to see into the next world; and this we may well call by a better name, for it is grace. But still Chrysippus by his divine necessity, which is destiny, and Zeno by his divine law, which is nature, and the Brachmans by their divine light, which is grace, (though they make the operations of God, God) yet they all intend in those divers names, the same power.

The natural man knows God. But then, to the natural man, who is not only finite, and determined in a compass, but narrow in his compass, not only not bottomless, but shallow in his comprehensions, to this natural, this finite, and narrow, and shallow man, no burden is so insupportable, no consideration so inextricable, no secret so inscrutable, no conception so incredible, as to conceive one infinite God, that should do all things alone, without any more gods. That that power that establishes counsels, that things may be carried in a constancy, and yet permits contingencies, that things shall fall out casually, that the God of certainty, and the God of contingency should be all one God, that that God that settles peace, should yet make wars, and in the day of battle, should be both upon that side that does, and that side that is overcome, that the conquered God, and the victorious God, should be both one God, that that God who is all goodness in himself, should yet have his hand in every ill action, this the natural man cannot digest, not comprehend. And therefore the natural man

eases himself, and thinks he eases God, by dividing the burden, and laying his particular necessities upon particular gods. Hence came those enormous multiplications of gods; Hesiod's thirty thousand gods, and three hundred Jupiters. Hence came it that they brought their children into the world under one god, and then put them to nurse, and then to school, and then to occupations and professions under other several gods. Hence came their *Vagitanus*, a god that must take care that children do not burst with crying; and their *Fabulanus*, a god that must take care, that children do not stammer in speaking; hence came their *Statelinus*, and their *Potinus;* a god that must teach them to go, and a god that must teach them to drink. So far, as that they came to make *Febrem deam*, to erect temples and altars to diseases, to age, to death itself; and so, all those punishments, which our true God laid upon man for sin, all our infirmities, they made gods. So far is the natural man from denying God, as that he multiplies them.

But yet never did these natural men, the Gentiles ascribe so much to their gods, (except some very few of them) as they of the Roman persuasion may seem to do to their saints. For they limited their devotions, and sacrifices, and supplications, in some certain and determined things, and those, for the most part, in this world; but in the Roman church, they all ask all of all, for they ask even things pertaining to the next world. And as they make their saints verier gods, than the Gentiles do theirs, in asking greater things at their hands, so have they more of them. For, if there be not yet more saints celebrated by name, than will make up Hesiod's thirty thousand, yet they have more, in this respect, that of Hesiod's thirty thousand, one nation worshipped one, another another thousand; in the Roman church, all worship all. And howsoever it be for the number, yet, saith one, we may live to see the number of Hesiod's thirty thousand equalled, and exceeded; for, if the Jesuits, who have got two of their order into the consistory, (they have had two cardinals) and two of their order into heaven, (they have had two saints canonized) if they could get one of their order into the chair, one pope; as we read of one general that knighted his whole army at once; so such a pope may canonize his whole order, and then Hesiod's thirty thousand would be literally fulfilled.

And, that, as we have done, in the multiplication of their gods, so, in their superstition to their created gods, we may also observe a congruity, a conformity, a concurrence between the heathen and the Roman religion; as the heathen cast such an intimidation, such an infatuation, not only upon the people, but upon the princes too, as that in the story of the Egyptian kings we find, that whensoever any of their priests signified unto any of their kings, that it was the pleasure of his god, that he should leave that kingdom, and come up to him, that king did always without any contradiction, any hesitation, kill himself; so are they come so near to this in the Roman church, as that, though they cannot infatuate such princes, as they are weary of, to kill themselves, yet when they are weary of princes, they can infatuate other men, to those assassinates, of which our neighbour kingdom hath felt the blow more than once, and we the offer, and the plotting more than many times.

That that I drive to, in this consideration, is this, That since man is naturally apt to multiply gods to himself, we do with all Christian diligence shut up ourselves in the belief and worship of our one and only God; without admitting any more mediators, or intercessors, or advocates, in any of those modifications or distinctions, with which the later men have painted and disguised the religion of Rome, to make them the more passable, and without making any one step towards meeting them, in their superstitious errors, but adhere entirely to our only Advocate, and Mediator, and Intercessor Christ Jesus; for he does no more need an assistant, in any of those offices, than in his office of Redeemer, or Saviour; and therefore, as they require no fellow-redeemer, no fellow-saviour, so neither let us admit any fellow-advocate, fellow-mediator, fellow-intercessor in heaven. For why may not that reason hold all the year, which they assign in the Roman church, for their forbearance of prayers to any saint, upon certain days? Upon Good-friday, and Easter-day, and Whit-sunday, say they, we must not pray to any saint, no not to the blessed Virgin, *Quia Christus, et Spiritus Sanctus, sunt tunc temporis, supremi, et unici advocati*[28]: because upon those days,

[28] Garantus in Rubr. Missal. par. i. tit. ix. § 8.

Christ, and the Holy Ghost, are our principal, nay upon those days, our only advocates. And are Christ, and the Holy Ghost out of office a week after Easter, or after Whitsuntide? Since man is naturally apt to multiply gods, let us be Christianly diligent, to conclude ourselves in one.

And then, since man is also naturally apt to stray into a superstitious worship of God, let us be Christianly diligent, to preclude all ways, that may lead us into that temptation, or incline us towards superstition. In which I do not intend, that we should decline all such things, as had been superstitiously abused, in a superstitious church; but, in all such things, as being in their own nature indifferent, are, by a just commandment of lawful authority, become more than indifferent (necessary) to us, though not *necessitate medii*, yet *necessitate præcepti*, (for, though salvation consist not in ceremonies, obedience doth, and salvation consists much in obedience) that in all such things, we always inform ourselves of the right use of those things in their first institution, of their abuse with which they have been depraved in the Roman church, and of the good use which is made of them in ours. That because pictures have been adored, we do not abhor a picture; nor sit at the sacrament, because idolatry hath been committed in kneeling. That church, which they call Lutheran, hath retained more of these ceremonies, than ours hath done; and ours more than that which they call Calvinist; but both the Lutheran, and ours, without danger, because, in both places, we are diligent to preach to the people the right use of these indifferent things. For this is a true way of shutting out superstition, not always to abolish the thing itself, because in the right use thereof, the spiritual profit, and edification may exceed the danger, but by preaching, and all convenient ways of instruction, to deliver people out of that ignorance, which possesses people in the Roman captivity.

From which natural inclination of man, we raise this, by way of conclusion of all, that since man is naturally apt to multiply gods to himself, and naturally apt to worship his gods superstitiously, since there is a proneness to many gods, and to superstition, in nature, there cannot be so unnatural a thing, no such monster in nature, or against nature, as an atheist, that believes

no God. For, when we, we that are Christians, have reproached this atheist, thus far, our way, Canst thou not believe one God? such a debility, such a nullity in thy faith, as not to believe one God? we require no more, and canst thou not do that, not one? when we, we that are Christians, have reproached him so far, the natural man of whose company he will pretend to be, will reproach him so much farther, as to say, Canst thou not believe one God? We, we who proceed by the same light that thou dost, believe a thousand. So that the natural man is as ready, readier than the Christian, to excommunicate the atheist; for, the atheist that denies all gods, does much more oppose the natural man, that believes a thousand, than the Christian, that believes but one.

Poor intricated soul! riddling, perplexed, labyrinthical soul! thou couldst not say, That thou believest not in God, if there were no God; thou couldst not believe in God, if there were no God; if there were no God, thou couldst not speak, thou couldst not think, not a word, not a thought, no not against God; thou couldst not blaspheme the name of God, thou couldst not swear, if there were no God: for, all thy faculties, however depraved, and perverted by thee, are from him; and except thou canst seriously believe, that thou art nothing, thou canst not believe that there is no God. If I should ask thee at a tragedy, where thou shouldst see him that had drawn blood, lie weltering, and surrounded in his own blood, Is there a God now? if thou couldst answer me, No, these are but inventions, and representations of men, and I believe a God never the more for this; if I should ask thee at a sermon, where thou shouldst hear the judgments of God formally denounced, and executed, re-denounced, and applied to present occasions, Is there a God now? If thou couldst answer me, No, these are but inventions of state, to supple and regulate congregations, and keep people in order, and I believe a God never the more for this; be as confident as thou canst, in company; for company is the atheist's sanctuary; I respite thee not till the day of judgment, when I may see thee upon thy knees, upon thy face, begging of the hills, that they would fall down and cover thee from the fierce wrath of God, to ask thee then, Is there a God now? I respite thee not till the day of thine own death,

when thou shalt have evidence enough, that there is a God, though no other evidence, but to find a devil, and evidence enough, that there is a heaven, though no other evidence, but to feel hell; to ask thee then, Is there a God now? I respite thee but a few hours, but six hours, but till midnight. Wake then; and then dark, and alone, hear God ask thee then, remember that I asked thee now, Is there a God? and if thou darest, say no.

And then, as there is an universal atheist, an atheist over all the world, that believes no God, so is he also an atheist, over all the Christian world, that believes not Christ. That which the apostle says to the Ephesians, *Absque Christo, absque Deo*, As long as you were *without Christ*, you were *without God*, is spoken (at least) to all that have heard Christ preached; not to believe God, so, as God hath exhibited, and manifested himself, in his Son Christ Jesus, is, in St. Paul's acceptation of that word, atheism: and St. Paul, and he that speaks in St. Paul, is too good a grammarian, too great a critic for thee to dispute against.

And then, as there is an universal atheist, he that denies God, and a more particular atheist, he that denies Christ; so in a narrower, and yet large sense of the word, there is an actual atheist, a practical atheist, who though he do pretend to make God, and God in Christ the object of his faith, yet does not make Christ, and Christ in the Holy Ghost, that is, Christ working in the ordinances of his church, the rule and pattern of his actions, but lives so, as no man can believe that he believes in God.

This universal atheist, that believes no God, the heavens, and all the powers therein, shall condemn at the last day; the particular atheist, that believes no Christ, the glorious company of the apostles, that established the church of Christ, shall condemn at that day; and the practical atheist, the ungodly liver, the noble army of martyrs, that did, and suffered so much for Christ, shall then condemn. And condemn him, not only as the most impious thing, but as the most inhuman; not only as the most ungodly, but as the most unnatural thing: for an atheist is not only a devil in religion, but a monster in nature; not only elemented and composed of heresies in the church, but of paradoxes, and absurdities in the world; natural men, the men of Malta, even barbarians, though subject to levity and changing their

minds, yet make this their first act after their change, to constitute a god, though in another extreme, yet in an evident and absolute averseness from atheism; *They changed their minds, and said, he was a god.* And be this enough for the explication of the words, and their application, and complication to the celebration of the day.

The God of heaven rectify us in us our natural logic; that in all his judgments we glorify God, without uncharitable condemning other men. The God of heaven sanctify to us our natural religion, that it be never quenched nor damped in us, never blown out by atheism, nor blown up by an idolatrous multiplying of false, or a superstitious worship of our true God. The God of heaven preserve us in safety, by the power of the Father; in saving knowledge, by the wisdom of the Son; and in a peaceful unity of affections, by the love and goodness of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

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## SERMON XLVII.

*PREACHED ON THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL,* 1629.

Acts xxiii. 6, 7.

But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the multitude was divided.

We consider ordinarily in the Old Testament, God the Father; and in the Gospels, God the Son; and in this book, the Acts, and in the Epistles, and the rest, God the Holy Ghost, that is, God in the government and administration of his church, as well in the ordinary ministry and constant callings therein, as in the extraordinary use of general councils; of which, we have the model, and platform, and precedent in the fifteenth chapter of this book. The book is noted to have above twenty sermons of the

apostles; and yet the book is not called the sermons, the preaching of the apostles, but the practice, the Acts of the Apostles. Our actions, if they be good, speak louder than our sermons. Our preaching is our speech, our good life is our eloquence. Preaching celebrates the Sabbath, but a good life makes the whole week a Sabbath, that is, a savour of rest in the nostrils of God, as it is said of Noah's sacrifice[1], when he came out of the Ark. The book is called the Acts of the Apostles; but says St. Chrysostom, and St. Hierome too, it might be called the Acts of St. Paul, so much more is it conversant about him, than all the rest. In which respect, at this time of the year, and in these days, when the church commemorates the conversion of St. Paul, I have, for divers years successively, in this place, determined myself upon this book. Once upon the very act of his conversion, in those words, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Once upon his valediction to his Ephesians at Miletus, in those words, *Now I know that all ye shall see my face no more;* and once upon the escape from the viper's teeth, and the viperous tongues of those inconstant and clamorous beholders, who first rashly cried out, *He is a murderer*, and *then changed their minds, and said, He is a god.* And now, for the service of your devotions, and the advancement of your edification, I have laid my meditations upon this his stratagem, and just avoiding of an unjust judgment, *When Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees*, &c.

In handling of which words, because they have occasioned a disputation, and a problem, whether this that Paul did, were well done, to raise a dissension amongst his judges, we shall stop first upon that consideration, that all the actions of holy men, of apostles in the New Testament, of patriarchs in the Old, are not to be drawn into example and consequence for others, no nor always to be excused and justified in them that did them; all actions of holy men, are not holy; that is first. And secondly, we shall consider this action of St. Paul, in some circumstances that invest it, and in some effects that it produced in our text, as dissension amongst his judges, and so a reprieving, or rather a putting off of the trial for that time; and these will determine

[1] Gen. viii.

our second consideration. And in a third, we shall lodge all these in ourselves, and make it our own case, and find that we have all Sadducees and Pharisees in our own bosoms, (contrary affections in our own hearts) and find an advantage in putting these home-Sadducees, and home-Pharisees, these contrary affections in our own bosoms, in colluctation, and opposition against one another, that they do not combine, and unite themselves to our farther disadvantage; a civil war, is, in this case, our way to peace; when one sinful affection crosses another, we scape better, than when all join, without any resistance. And in these three, first the general, how we are to estimate all actions, and then the particular, what we are to think of St. Paul's action, and lastly, the individual, how we are to direct and regulate our own actions, we shall determine all.

First then, though it be a safer way, to suspect an action to be sin that is not, than to presume an action to be no sin, that is so, yet that rule holds better in ourselves, than in other men; for, in judging the actions of other men, our suspicion may soon stray into an uncharitable misinterpretation, and we may sin in condemning that in another, which was no sin in him that did it. But, in truth, *Transilire lineam*, To depart from the direct and straight line, is sin, as well on the right hand, as on the left; and the devil makes his advantages upon the over-tender, and scrupulous conscience, as well as upon the over-confident, and obdurate; and many men have erred as much, in justifying some actions of holy men, as in calumniating, or miscondemning of others. If we had not evidence in Scripture, that Abraham received that commandment from God, who could justify Abraham's proceeding with his son Isaac? And therefore who shall be afraid to call Noah's drunkenness, and his indecent lying in his tent, or Lot's drunkenness, and his iterated incest with his daughters, or his inconsiderate offer to prostitute his daughters to the Sodomites, or to call David's complicated and multiplied sin, a sin? When the church celebrates Samson's death, though he killed himself, it is upon a tender and holy supposition, that he might do this not without some instinct and inspiration from the Spirit of God. But howsoever the church interprets such actions, it is a dangerous and a fallacious way, for any private man to

argue so, the Spirit of God directed this man in many actions, therefore in all; and dangerous to conclude an action to be good, either because he that did it, had a good purpose in doing it, or because some good effects proceeded from it. *Bonum bene*, are the two horses that must carry us to heaven; to do good things, and to do them well; to propose good ends, and to go by good ways to those good ends. The midwives' lie, in the behalf of the Israelites' children, was a lie, and a sin, howsoever God, out of his own goodness, found something in their piety, to reward. I should not venture to say, as he said, nor to say that he said well, when Moses said, *Dele me, Forgive their sin, or blot me out of thy Book*[2]; nor when St. Paul said, *Anathema pro fratribus, I could wish that myself were separated from Christ for my brethren*[3]. I would not, I could not without sin, be content that my name should be blotted out of the Book of Life, or that I should be separated from Christ, though all the world beside were to be blotted out, and separated, if I stayed in.

The benefit that we are to make of the errors of holy men, is not that, that man did this, therefore I may do it: but this, God suffered that holy man to fall, and yet loved that good soul well, God hath not therefore cast me away, though he have suffered me to fall too. Bread is man's best sustenance, yet there may be a dangerous surfeit of bread; charity is the bread that the soul lives by; yet there may be a surfeit of charity; I may mislead myself shrewdly, if I say, Surely my father is a good man, my master a good man, my pastor a good man, men that have the testimony of God's love, by his manifold blessings upon them; and therefore I may be bold to do whatsoever I see them do. *Be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect*[4], is the example that Christ gives you. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*[5], is the example that the apostle gives you. Good examples are good assistances; but no example of man is sufficient to constitute a certain and constant rule; all the actions of the holiest man are not holy.

Hence appears the vanity and impertinency of that calumny, with which our adversaries of the Roman persuasion labour to

[2] Exod. xxxii. 32.
[3] Rom. ix. 3.
[4] Matt. v. 48.
[5] 1 Cor. xi. 1.

oppress us, that those points in which we depart from them, cannot be well established, because therein we depart from the fathers; as though there were no condemnation to them, that pretended a perpetual adhering to the fathers, nor salvation to them, who suspected any father of any mistaking. And they have thought that one thing enough, to discredit, and blast, and annihilate that great and useful labour, which the centuriators, the Magdeburgenses, took in compiling the ecclesiastical story, that in every age as they pass, those authors have laid out a particular section, a particular chapter, *De nævis patrum*, to note the mistakings of the fathers in every age; this they think a criminal and a heinous thing, enough to discredit the whole work; as though there were ever in any age, any father, that mistook nothing, or that it were blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, to note such a mistaking. And yet, if those blessed fathers, now in possession of heaven, be well affected with our celebrating, or ill, with our neglecting their works, certainly they find much more cause to complain of our adversaries, than of us. Never any in the Reformation hath spoken so lightly, nay, so heavily; so negligently, nay, so diligently, so studiously in diminution of the fathers, as they have done. One of the first Jesuits proceeds with modesty and ingenuity, and yet says, *Quælibet ætas antiquitati detulit*[6], Every age hath been apt to ascribe much to the ancient fathers; *Hoc autem asserimus*, says he, *Juniores doctores perspicaciores*, This we must necessarily acknowledge, that our later men have seen farther than the elder fathers did. His fellow-Jesuit goes farther; *Hoc omnes dicunt, sed non probant*[7], says he, speaking of one person in the genealogy of Christ, this the fathers say, says he, and later men too; Catholics, and heretics; all: but none of them prove it; he will not take their words, not the whole church's, though they all agree. But a bishop of as much estimation and authority in the Council of Trent, as any[8], goes much farther; being pressed with St. Augustine's opinion, he says, *Nec nos tantillum moveat Augustinus*, Let it never trouble us, which way St. Augustine goes; *Hoc enim illi peculiare*, says he, *ut alium errorem expugnans, alteri ansam præbeat*, for this is

[6] Salmeron. [7] Maldon. [8] Cornel. Musæus.

inseparable from St. Augustine, That out of an earnestness to destroy one error, he will establish another. Nor doth that bishop impute that distemper only to St. Augustine, but to St. Hierome too; of him he says, *In medio positus certamine, ardore feriendi adversarios, premit et socios*, St. Hierome lays about him, and rather than miss his enemy, he wounds his friends also. But all that might better be borne than this, *Turpiter errarunt patres*, The fathers fell foully into errors; and this, better than that, *Eorum opinio, opinio hæreticorum*, The fathers differ not from the heretics, concur with the heretics. Who in the Reformation hath charged the fathers so far? And yet Baronius hath.

If they did not oppress us with this calumny of neglecting, or undervaluing the fathers, we should not make our recourse to this way of recrimination; for, God knows, if it be modestly done, and with the reverence, in many respects, due to them, it is no fault to say the fathers fell into some faults. Yet, it is rather our adversaries' observation than ours, That all the ancient fathers were Chiliasts, Millenarians, and maintained that error of a thousand years' temporal happiness upon this earth, between the resurrection, and our actual and eternal possession of heaven; it is their observation rather than ours, That all the ancient fathers denied the dead a fruition of the sight of God, till the day of judgment; it is theirs rather than ours, That all the Greek fathers, and some of the Latin, assigned God's foreknowledge of man's works, to be the cause of his predestination. It is their note, That for the first six hundred years, the general opinion, and general practice of the church was, to give the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to infants newly baptized, as a thing necessary to their salvation. They have noted, that the opinion of the ancient fathers was contrary to the present opinion in the church of Rome, concerning the conception of the blessed Virgin without original sin. These notes and imputations arise from their authors, and not from ours, and they have told it us, rather than we them.

Indeed neither we nor they can dissemble the mistakings of the fathers. The fathers themselves would not have them dissembled. *De me*, says St. Hierome, *ubicunque de meo sensu loquor, arguat me quilibet*, For my part, wheresoever I deliver

but mine own opinion, every man hath his liberty to correct me. It is true, St. Augustine does call Julian the Pelagian to the fathers; but it is to vindicate and redeem the fathers from those calumnies which Julian had laid upon them, that they were *Multitudo cæcorum*, a herd, a swarm of blind guides, and followers of one another, and that they were *Conspiratio perditorum*, damned conspirators against the truth. To set the fathers in their true light, and to restore them to their lustre and dignity, and to make Julian confess what reverend persons they were, St. Augustine calls him to the consideration of the fathers, but not to try matters of faith by them alone. For, *Sapientiam sibi adimit, qui sine judicio majorum inventa probat*[9], that man divests himself of all discretion, who, without examination, captivates his understanding to the fathers.

It is ingenuously said by one of their later writers, (if he would but give us leave to say so too) *Sequamur patres, tanquam duces, non tanquam dominos*[10], Let us follow the fathers as guides, not as lords over our understandings, as counsellors, not as commanders. It is too much to say of any father that which Nicephorus says of St. Chrysostom, *In illius perinde atque in Dei verbis quiesco*, I am as safe in Chrysostom's words, as in the word of God; that is too much. It is too much to say of any father that which Sophronius says of Leo, that his epistles were *Divina Scriptura, tanquam ex ore Petri prolata, et fundamentum fidei*, That he received the epistles that Leo writ, as holy writ, as written by St. Peter himself, and as the foundation of his faith; that is too much. It is too much to say of St. Peter himself that which Chrysologus says, That he is *Immobile fundamentum salutis*, The immovable foundation of our salvation, *et mediator noster apud Deum*, the mediator of man to God. Their Jesuit Azorius gives us a good caution herein; he says It is a good and safe way, in all emergent doubts, to govern ourselves *per communem opinionem*, by the common opinion, by that, in which most authors agree; but says he, how shall we know which is the common opinion? Since, not only that is the common opinion in one age, that is not so in another, (the common opinion was in the primitive church, that the blessed Virgin was con-

[9] Lactantius. [10] Cajetan.

ceived in original sin, the common opinion now, is that she was not) but if we consider the same age, that is the common opinion in one place, in one country, which is not so in another place, at the same time; that Jesuit puts his example in the worship of the cross of Christ, and says, That, at this day, in Germany and in France it is the common opinion, and Catholic divinity, that λατρεία, Divine worship, is not due to the cross of Christ; in Italy and in Spain it is the common opinion, and Catholic divinity, that it is due. Now, how shall he govern himself, that is unlearned, and not able to try, which is the common opinion? Or how shall the learnedest of all govern himself if he have occasion to travel, but to change his divinity, as often as he changes his coin, and when he turns his Dutch dollars into pistolets, to go out of Germany, into Spain, turn his devotion, and his religious worship according to the clime? To end this consideration, the holy patriarchs in the Old Testament, were holy men, though they strayed into some sinful actions; the holy fathers in the primitive church, were holy men, though they strayed into some erroneous opinions; but neither are the holiest men's actions always holy, nor the soundest father's opinions always sound. And therefore the question hath been not impertinently moved, whether this that St. Paul did here, were justifiably done, *Who, when he perceived that one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees*, &c. And so we are come to our second part, from the consideration of actions in general, to this particular action of St. Paul.

In this second part we make three steps. First, we shall consider, what council, what court this was, before whom St. Paul was convented, (*He cried out in the council*, says the text) whether they were his competent judges, and so he bound to a clear, and direct proceeding with them; and secondly, what his end and purpose was, that he proposed to himself; which was to divide the judges, and so to put off his trial to another day; for, when he had said that (says the text) that that he had to say, *There arose a dissension, and the multitude*, All, both judges, and spectators, and witnesses, were *divided;* and then lastly, by what way he went to this end; which was by a double protestation, first that, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee;* and

then that, *Of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question.*

First then, for the competency of his judges, whether a man be examined before a competent judge or no, he may not lie: we can put no case, in which it may be lawful for any man to lie to any man; not to a midnight, nor to a noon thief, that breaks my house, or assaults my person, I may not lie. And though many have put names of disguise, as equivocations, and reservations, yet they are all children of the same father, the father of lies, the devil, and of the same brood of vipers, they are lies. To an incompetent judge, if I be interrogated, I must speak truth, if I speak; but to a competent judge, I must speak: with the incompetent I may not be false, but with the competent, I may not be silent. Certainly, that standing mute at the bar, which, of late times hath prevailed upon many distempered wretches, is, in itself, so particularly a sin, as that I should not venture to absolve any such person, nor to administer the sacrament to him, how earnestly soever he desired it at his death, how penitently soever he confessed all his other sins, except he repented in particular, that sin, of having stood mute and refused a just trial, and would be then content to submit himself to it, if that favour might possibly at that time be afforded him. To an incompetent judge I must not lie, but I may be silent, to a competent I must answer.

Consider we then the competency of St. Paul's judges, what this council, this court was. It was that council, which is so often in the New Testament called *συνέδριον*, and in our translation, the council. The Jews speak much of their *Lex oralis*, their oral, their traditional law; that is, That exposition of the law, which, say they, Moses received from the mouth of God, without writing, in that forty days' conversation which he had with God, in the Mount; for, it is not probable, say they, that Moses should spend forty days in that, which another man would have done in one or two, that is, in receiving only that law which is written: but he received an exposition too, and delivered that to Joshua, and he to the principal men, and according to that exposition, they proceeded in judgment, in this council, in this their *synedrion*. Which council having had the first institution thereof, where God said to Moses, *Gather me seventy men of the*

*elders of Israel, officers over the people, and I will take of the spirit that is upon thee, and put it upon them, and they shall bear the burden*[11]; that is, I will impart to them that exposition of the law, which I have imparted to thee, and by that they shall proceed in judgment, in this council, this *synedrion* of seventy, had continued (though with some variations) to this time, when St. Paul was now called before them. Of this council of seventy, this synedrion, our blessed Saviour speaks, when he says, *He that says Raca*, (that is, declares his anger by any opprobrious words of defamation,) *shall be subject to the council*[12]. Of this council he speaks, when he says, *For my sake, they will deliver you up to the council*[13]; and from this council it is, not inconveniently, thought, that those messengers were sent, which were sent to examine John Baptist, whether he were the Messiah or no; for there it is said, *That Priests and Levites were sent*[14]; and this council, says Josephus, at first, (and for a long time) consisted of such persons, though, after, a third order was taken in, that is, some principal men of the other tribes. To this council belonged the cognizance of all causes, ecclesiastical and civil, and of all persons, no magistrate, no prophet was exempt from this court[15]. Before this council was Herod himself called, for an execution done by his command, which, though it were done upon a notorious malefactor, yet was done without due proceedings in law, and therefore Herod was called before this council for it.

But (by the way) this was not done when Herod was king, as Baronius doth mischievously and seditiously infer and argue, as though this council were above the king. Herod at that time, was very far from any imagination of being king; his father, Antipater, who then was alive, having, at that time, no pretence to the kingdom. But Herod, though young, was then in a great place of government, and for a misdemeanor there, was called before this council, which had jurisdiction over all but the king. For so, in the Talmud itself, the difference is expressly put; *Sacerdos magnus judicat et judicatur*, The high priest, the greatest prelate in the clergy, may have place in this council, and may be called in question by this council, *Judicat et*

[11] Numb. xi. 16. [12] Matt. v. 22. [13] John x. 17.
[14] John i. 19. [15] Joseph. l. xiv. c. 17.

*judicatur;* So, *Testimonium dicit, et de eo dicitur*, He may go from the bench, and be a witness against any man, and he may be put from the bench, and any man's witness be received against him. But then of the king, it is as expressly said, of this council, in that Talmud, *Nec judicat, nec judicatur*, The king sits in judgment upon no man, lest his presence should intimidate an accused person, or draw the other judges from their own opinion to his; much less can the king be judged by any; *Nec testimonium dicit, nec de eo dicitur*, The king descends not to be a witness against any man, neither can any man be a witness against him. It was therefore mischievously, and seditiously, and treacherously, and traitorously, and (in one comprehensive word) papistically argued by Baronius, that this council was above the king.

But above all other persons it was; in some cases, in the whole body of the council; for, matters of religion, innovations in points of doctrine, imputations upon great persons in the church, were not to be judged by any selected committee, but by the whole council, the entire body, the seventy; pecuniary matters, and matters of defamation, might be determined by a committee of any three; matters that induced bodily punishments, though it were but flagellation, but a whipping matter, not under a committee of twenty-three. But so were all persons, and all causes distributed, as that that court, that council had cognizance of all. So that then St. Paul was before a competent and a proper judge, and therefore bound to answer; did he that? That is our next disquisition, and our second consideration in this part, his end, his purpose in proceeding as he did.

His end was to dissolve the council for the present. He saw a tumultuary proceeding; for, as the text says, he was fain *to cry out in the council*, before he could be heard. He saw the president of the council, Ananias the high priest, so ill-affected towards him, as that he commanded him extra-judicially to be smitten. He saw a great part of his judges, and spectators, amongst whom were the witnesses, to be his declared enemies. He saw that if he proceeded to a trial then, he perished infallibly, irrecoverably, and therefore desired to put off the trial for that time. He did not deny nor decline the jurisdiction of that court; he had no

eye to any foreign prince, nor prelate: there are amongst us that do so; that deny that they can be traitors, though they commit treason, because they are subjects to a foreign bishop, and not to their natural king; St. Paul did not do so. He did not calumniate nor traduce the proceedings of that court, nor put into the people ill opinions of their superiors, by laying aspersions upon them; there are that do so; St. Paul did not. But his end and purpose was only to put off the trial for that time, till he might be received to a more sober, and calm, and equitable hearing. And this certainly was no ill end, so his way were good. What was that? That is our next, our third and last consideration in this part.

His way was by a two-fold protestation; the first this, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee.* The Pharisees were a sect amongst the Jews, who are ordinarily conceived to have received their name from division, from separation, from departing from that liberty, which other men did take, to a stricter form of life. Of which, amongst many others, St. Hierome gives us this evidence, that the Pharisees would fringe their long robes with thorns, that so they might cut, and tear, and mangle their heels and legs as they went, in the sight of the people. Outward mortification and austerity was a specious thing, and of great estimation amongst the Jews: you may see that in John Baptist: who was as much followed, and admired for that, as Christ for his miracles, though John Baptist did no miracles. For extraordinary austerity is a continual miracle. As St. Hierome says of chastity, *Habet servata pudicitia martyrium suum*, Chastity is a continual martyrdom; so to surrender a man's self to a continual hunger, and thirst, and cold, and watching, and forbearing all which all others enjoy, a continual mortification is a continual miracle. This made the Pharisees gracious and acceptable to the people: therefore St. Paul doth not make his protestation here only so, *That he had been as touching the law, a Pharisee*[16], nor as he makes it in this book, *After the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee*[17], that is, heretofore I did, but now, after his conversion, and after his apostolical commission, he makes it, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee.*

[16] Phil. iii. 5. [17] Acts xxvi. 5.

'Beloved, there are some things in which all religions agree; the worship of God, the holiness of life; and therefore, if when I study this holiness of life, and fast, and pray, and submit myself to discreet, and medicinal mortifications, for the subduing of my body, any man will say, this is papistical, Papists do this, it is a blessed protestation, and no man is the less a Protestant, nor the worse a Protestant for making it, men and brethren, I am a Papist, that is, I will fast and pray as much as any Papist, and enable myself for the service of my God, as seriously, as sedulously, as laboriously as any Papist. So, if when I startle and am affected at a blasphemous oath, as at a wound upon my Saviour, if when I avoid the conversation of those men, that profane the Lord's day, any other will say to me, This is puritanical, Puritans do this, it is a blessed protestation, and no man is the less a Protestant, nor the worse a Protestant for making it. Men and brethren, I am a Puritan, that is, I will endeavour to be pure, as my Father in heaven is pure, as far as any Puritan.

Now of these Pharisees, who were by these means so popular, the numbers were very great. The Sadducees, who also were of an exemplary holiness in some things, but in many and important things of different opinions, even in matters of religion, from all other men, were not so many in number, but they were men of better quality and place in the state, than, for the most part, the Pharisees were. And as they were more potent, and able to do more mischief, so had they more declared themselves to be bent against the apostles, than the Pharisees had done. In the fourth chapter of this book [18], *The Priests and the Sadducees*, (no mention of Pharisees) *came upon Peter and John, being grieved, that they preached, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead.* And so again, *The high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, which is* (says that text expressly) *the sect of the Sadducees, and were filled with indignation* [19]. And some collect out of a place in Eusebius, that this Ananias, who was high priest at this time, and had declared his ill affection to St. Paul, (as you heard before) was a Sadducee: but I think those words of Eusebius will not bear, at least, not enforce that, nor be well applied to this Ananias. Howsoever, St. Paul had just cause to

[18] Ver. 2. [19] Acts v. 17.

come to this protestation, *I am a Pharisee*, and in so doing he can be obnoxious to nothing; if he be as safe in his other protestation, all is well, *for the hope and resurrection of the dead, am I called in question;* consider we that.

It is true, that he was not, at this time, called in question, directly and expressly *for the resurrection;* you may see, where he was apprehended, that it was *for teaching against that people, and against that law, and against that temple*[20]. So that, he was indicted upon pretence of sedition, and profanation of the temple. And therefore, when St. Paul says here, *I am called in question for preaching the Resurrection*, he means this, If I had not preached the resurrection, I should never have been called in question, nor should be, if I would forbear preaching the resurrection; no man persecutes me, no man appears against me, but only they that deny the resurrection; the Sadducees did deny it; the Pharisees did believe it; and therefore this was a likely and a lawful way to divide them, and to gain time, with such a purpose, (so far) as David had, when he prayed, *O Lord, divide their tongues*[21]. For it is not always unlawful to sow discord, and to kindle dissension among men; for men may agree too well, to ill purposes. So have ye then seen, that though it be not safe to conclude, St. Paul, or any holy man did this, therefore I may do it, (which was our first part) yet in this which St. Paul did here, there was nothing that may not be justified in him, and imitated by us, (which was our second part) remains only the third, which is the accommodation of this to our present times, and the appropriation thereof to ourselves, and making it our own case.

The world is full of Sadducees, and Pharisees, and the true church of God, arraigned by both. The Sadducees were the greater men, the Pharisees were the greater number; so they are still. *The Sadducees denied the resurrection, and angels, and spirits;* so they do still. For those Sadducees, whom we consider now, in this part, are mere carnal men; men that have not only no spirit of God in them, but no soul, no spirit of their own; mere atheists. And this carnality, this atheism, this Sadducism is seen in some countries to prevail most upon great

[20] Acts xxi. 28. [21] Psal. LV. 9.

persons, (the Sadducees were great persons) upon persons that abound in the possessions, and offices, and honours of this world; for they that have most of this world, for the most part, think least of the next.

These are our present Sadducees; and then the Pharisee hath his name from *Pharas*, which is division, separation; but Calvin derives the name (not inconveniently) from *Pharash*, which is exposition, explication. We embrace both extractions, and acceptations of the word, both *separation* and *exposition*; for the Pharisee whom we consider now, in this part, is he that is separated from us, (there it is *Pharas*, separation) and separated by following private expositions, (there it is *Pharash*, exposition) with a contempt of all antiquity; and not only an under-valuation, but a detestation of all opinions but his own, and his, whom he hath set up for his idol. And as the Sadducee (our great and worldly man) is all carnal, all body, and believes no spirit: so our Pharisee is so super-spiritual, as that he believes, that is, considers nobody; he imagines such a purification, such an angelification, such a deification in this life, as though the heavenly Jerusalem were descended already, or that God had given man but that one commandment, *Love God above all*, and not a second to, *Love thy neighbour as thyself*. Our Sadducees will have all body, our Pharisees all soul, and God hath made us of both, and given us offices proper to each.

Now of both these, the present Sadducee, the carnal atheist, and the present Pharisee, the separatist, that overvalues himself, and bids us stand further off, there are two kinds. For, for the atheist, there is David's atheist, and St. Paul's atheist; David's, that ascribes all to nature, and *says in his heart, There is no God*[22]; that will call no sudden death, nor extraordinary punishment upon any enormous sinner, a judgment of God, nor any such deliverance of his servants, a miracle from God, but all is nature, or all is accident, and would have been so, though there had been no God: this is nature's Sadducee, David's atheist; and then St. Paul's atheist is he, who, though he do believe in God, yet doth not believe God in Christ; for so St. Paul says to the Ephesians, *Absque Christo, absque Deo*, If ye be

[22] Psal. xiv. 2.

*without Christ*, ye are *without God*[23]. For as it is the same absurdity in nature, to say, There is no sun, and to say, This that you call the sun is not the sun, this that shines out upon you, this that produces your fruits, and distinguishes your seasons, is not the sun: so is it the same atheism, in these days of light, to say, There is no God, and to say, this Christ whom you call the Son of God, is not God, that he in whom God hath manifested himself, he whom God had made head of the church, and Judge of the world, is not God. This then is our double Sadducee, David's atheist that believes not God, St. Paul's atheist that believes not Christ. And as our Sadducee is, so is our Pharisee two-fold also.

There is a Pharisee, that by following private expositions, separates himself from our church, principally for matter of government and discipline, and imagines a church that shall be defective in nothing, and does not only think himself to be of that church, but sometimes to be that church, for none but himself is of that persuasion. And there is a Pharisee that dreams of such an union, such an identification with God in this life, as that he understands all things, not by benefit of the senses, and impressions in the fancy and imagination, or by discourse and ratiocination, as we poor souls do, but by immediate, and continual infusions and inspirations from God himself; that he loves God, not by participation of his successive grace, more and more, as he receives more and more grace, but by a communication of God himself to him, entirely and irrevocably; that he shall be without any need, and above all use of Scriptures, and that the Scriptures shall be no more to him, than a catechism to our greatest doctors; that all that God commands him to do in this world, is but as an easy walk down a hill; that he can do all that easily, and as much more, as shall make God beholden to him, and bring God into his debt, and that he may assign any man to whom God shall pay the arrearages due to him, that is, appoint God upon what man he shall confer the benefit of his works of supererogation; for in such propositions as these, and in such paradoxes as these, do the authors in the Roman church delight

[23] Ephes. ii. 12.

to express and celebrate their Pharisaical purity, as we find it frequently, abundantly in them.

In a word, some of our home-Pharisees will say, that there are some, who by benefit of a certain election, cannot sin; that the adulteries and blasphemies of the elect, are not sins; but the Rome-Pharisee will say, that some of them are not only without sin in themselves, but that they can save others from sin, or the punishment of sin, by their works of supererogation; and that they are so united, so identified with God already, as that they are in possession of the beatifical vision of God, and see him essentially, and as he is, in this life: (for that Ignatius the father of the Jesuits did so, some of his disciples say[24], it is at least probable, if not certain) and that they have done all that they had to do for their own salvation, long ago, and stay in the world now, only to gather treasure for others, and to work out their salvation. So that these men are in better state in this life, than the saints are in heaven; there, the saints may pray for others, but they cannot merit for others; these men here can merit for other men, and work out the salvation of others. Nay, they may be said in some respect to exceed Christ himself; but Christ did save no man here, but by dying for him; these men save other men, with living well for them, and working out their salvation.

These are our double Sadducees, and our double Pharisees; and now, beloved, if we would go so far in St. Paul's way, as to set this two-fold Sadducee, David's atheist, without God, and St. Paul's atheist, without Christ, against our two-fold Pharisee, our home-Catharist, and our Rome-Catharist, if we would spend all our wit, and all our time, all our ink, and our gall, in showing them the deformities and iniquities of one another, by our preaching and writing against them, the truth, and the true church might (as St. Paul did in our text) scape the better. But when we (we that differ in no such points) tear, and wound, and mangle one another with opprobious contumelies, and odious names of subdivision in religion, our home-Pharisee, and our Rome-Pharisee, maligners of our discipline, and maligners of our doctrine, gain upon us, and make their advantages of our contentions, and

[24] Sandæus Theolog. par. i. fo. 760.

both the Sadducees, David's atheist that denies God, and St. Paul's atheist that denies Christ, join in a scornful asking us, *Where is now your God?* Are not we as well that deny him absolutely, as you that profess him with wrangling?

But stop we the floodgates of this consideration; it would melt us into tears. End we all with this, that we have all, all these, Sadducees and Pharisees in our own bosoms: Sadducees that deny spirits; carnal apprehensions that are apt to say, Is your God all spirit, and hath bodily eyes to see sin? All spirit, and hath bodily hands to strike for a sin? Is your soul all spirit, and hath a fleshly heart to fear? All spirit, and hath sensible sinews to feel a material fire? Was your God, who is all spirit, wounded when you quarrelled? Or did your soul, which is all spirit, drink when you were drunk? Sins of presumption, and carnal confidence are our Sadducees; and then our Pharisees are our sins of separation, of division, of diffidence and distrust in the mercies of our God; when we are apt to say, after a sin, Cares God, who is all spirit, for my eloquent prayers, or for my passionate tears? Is the giving of my goods to the poor, or of my body to the fire, anything to God who is all spirit? My spirit, and nothing but my spirit, my soul, and nothing but my soul, must satisfy the justice, the anger of God, and be separated from him for ever. My Sadducee, my presumption, suggests, that there is no spirit, no soul to suffer for sin; and my Pharisee, my desperation, suggests, that my soul must perish irremediably, irrecoverably, for every sin that my body commits.

Now if I go St. Paul's way, to put a dissension between these my Sadducees, and my Pharisees, to put a jealousy between my presumption and my desperation, to make my presumption see, that my desperation lies in wait for her; and to consider seriously, that my presumption will end in desperation, I may, as St. Paul did in the text, scape the better for that. But if, without farther troubling these Sadducees and these Pharisees, I be content to let them agree, and to divide my life between them, so as that my presumption shall possess all my youth, and desperation mine age, I have heard my sentence already, *The end of this man will be worse than his beginning*, how much soever God be incensed with me, for my presumption at first, he will be

much more inexorable for my desperation at last. And therefore interrupt the prescription of sin; break off the correspondence of sin; unjoint the dependency of sin upon sin. Bring every single sin, as soon as thou committest it, into the presence of thy God, upon those two legs, confession, and detestation, and thou shalt see, that, as, though an entire island stand firm in the sea, yet a single clod of earth cast into the sea, is quickly washed into nothing; so, howsoever thine habitual, and customary, and concatenated sins, sin enwrapped and complicated in sin, sin entrenched and barricadoed in sin, sin screwed up, and rivetted with sin, may stand out, and wrestle even with the mercies of God, in the blood of Christ Jesus; yet if thou bring every single sin into the sight of God, it will be but as a clod of earth, but as a grain of dust in the ocean. Keep thy sins then from mutual intelligence; that they do not second one another, induce occasion, and then support and disguise one another, and then, neither shall the body of sin ever oppress thee, nor the exhalations, and damps, and vapours of thy sad soul, hang between thee, and the mercies of thy God; but thou shalt live in the light and serenity of a peaceable conscience here, and die in a fair possibility of a present melioration and improvement of that light. All thy life thou shalt be preserved, in an oriental light, an eastern light, a rising and a growing light, the light of grace; and at thy death thou shalt be super-illustrated, with a meridional light, a south light, the light of glory. And be this enough for the explication, and application of these words, and their complication with the day; for the justifying of St. Paul's stratagem in himself, and the exemplifying, and imitation thereof in us. *Amen.*

That God that is the God of peace, grant us his peace, and one mind towards one another; that God that is the Lord of Hosts, maintain in us that war, which himself hath proclaimed, an enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, between the truth of God, and the inventions of men; that we may fight his battles against his enemies without, and fight his battles against our enemies within, our own corrupt affections; that we may be victorious here, in ourselves, and over ourselves, and triumph with him hereafter, in eternal glory.

# SERMON XLVIII.

*PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

PSALM vi. 1.

**O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.**

GOD imputes but one thing to David, but one sin; *The matter of Uriah the Hittite:* nor that neither, but by way of exception, not till he had first established an assurance, that David stood well with him. First he had said, *David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything, that he had commanded him all the days of his life*[1]: here was rectitude, *He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord;* no obliquity, no departing into by-ways, upon collateral respects; here was integrity to God's service, no serving of God and mammon, *He turned not from anything that God commanded him;* and here was perpetuity, perseverance, constancy, *all the days of his life:* and then, and not till then, God makes that one, and but that one exception, *Except the matter of Uriah the Hittite.* When God was reconciled to him, he would not so much as name that sin, that had offended him.

And herein is the mercy of God, in the merits of Christ, a sea of mercy, that as the sea retains no impression of the ships that pass it, (for navies make no path in the sea) so when we put out into the boundless sea of the blood of Christ Jesus, by which only we have reconciliation to God, there remains no record against us; for God hath cancelled that record which he kept, and that which Satan kept God hath nailed to the cross of his Son. That man which hath seen me at the sealing of my pardon, and the seal of my reconciliation, at the sacrament, many times since, will yet in his passion, or in his ill nature, or in his uncharitableness, object to me the sins of my youth; whereas God himself, if I have repented to-day, knows not the sins that I

[1] 1 Kings xv. 5.

did yesterday. God hath rased the record of my sin, in heaven; it offends not him, it grieves not his saints nor angels there; and he hath rased the record in hell; it advances not their interest in me there, nor their triumph over me. And yet here, the uncharitable man will know more, and see more, and remember more, than my God, or his devil, remembers, or knows, or sees: he will see a path in the sea; he will see my sin, when it is drowned in the blood of my Saviour. After the king's pardon, perchance it will bear an action, to call a man by that infamous name, which that crime, which is pardoned, did justly cast upon him before the pardon: after God's reconciliation to David, he would not name David's sin in the particular.

But yet for all this, though God will be no example, of upbraiding or reproaching repented sins, when God hath so far expressed his love, as to bring that sinner to that repentance, and so to mercy, yet, that he may perfect his own care, he exercises that repentant sinner with such medicinal corrections, as may enable him to stand upright for the future. And to that purpose, was no man ever more exercised than David. David broke into another's family; he built upon another's ground; he planted in another's seminary; and God broke into his family, his ground, his seminary. In no story, can we find so much domestic affliction, such rapes, and incests, and murders, and rebellions, from their own children, as in David's story. Under the heavy weight and oppression of some of those, is David, by all expositors, conceived to have conceived, and uttered this Psalm. Some take it to have been occasioned by some of his temporal afflictions; either his persecution from Saul, or bodily sickness in himself, of which traditionally the rabbins speak much, or Absalom's unnatural rebellion. Some others, with whom we find more reason to join, find more reason to interpret it of a spiritual affliction; that David, in the apprehension, and under the sense of the wrath and indignation of God, came to this vehement exclamation, or deprecation, *O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.*

In which words we shall consider, first the person, upon whom David turned for his succour, and then what succour he seeks at his hands. First his word, and then his end; first to whom, and

then for what he supplicates. And in the first of these, the person, we shall make these three steps; first that he makes his first access to God only, *O Lord rebuke me not;* do not thou, and though I will not say, I care not, yet I care the less who do. And secondly, that it is to God by name, not to any universal God, in general notions; so natural men come to God; but to God whom he considers in a particular name, in particular notions, and attributes, and manifestations of himself; a God whom he knows, by his former works done upon him. And then, that name in which he comes to him here, is the name of Jehovah; his radical, his fundamental, his primary, his essential name, the name of *Being*, Jehovah. For, he that deliberately, and considerately believes himself to have his very being from God, believes certainly that he hath his well-being from him too; he that acknowledges, that it is by God's providence that he breathes, believes that it is by his providence that he eats too. So his access is to God, and to God by name, that is by particular considerations, and then, to God in the name of Jehovah, to that God that hath done all, from his first beginning, from his being. And in these three we shall determine our first part.

First, in this first branch of this part, David comes to God, but without any confidence in himself. Here is *Reus ad rostra sine patrono*, Here is the prisoner at the bar, and no counsel allowed him. He confesses indictments, faster than they can be read: if he hear himself indicted, that he looked upon Bathsheba, that he lusted after Bathsheba, he cries, Alas, I have done that, and more; dishonoured her, and myself, and our God; and more than that, I have continued the act into a habit; and more than that, I have drowned that sin in blood, lest it should rise up to my sight; and more than all that, I have caused the name of God to be blasphemed; and lest his Majesty, and his greatness should be a terror to me, I have occasioned the enemy to undervalue him, and speak despitefully of God himself. And when he hath confessed all, all that he remembers, he must come to his *Ab occultis meis*, *Lord cleanse me from my secret sins;* for there are sins, which we have laboured so long to hide from the world, that at last, they are hidden from ourselves, from our own memories, our own consciences. As much as David stands in

fear of this Judge, he must entreat this Judge, to remember his sins; remember them, O Lord, for else they will not fall into my pardon; but remember them in mercy, and not in anger; for so they will not fall into my pardon neither.

Whatsoever the affliction then was, temporal, or spiritual, (we take it rather to be spiritual) David's recourse is presently to God. He doth not, as his predecessor Saul did, when he was afflicted, send for one that was cunning upon the harp, to divert sorrow so[s]. If his subjects rebel, he doth not say, Let them alone, let them go on, I shall have the juster cause, by their rebellion, of confiscations upon their estates, of executions upon their persons, of revocations of their laws, and customs, and privileges, which they carry themselves so high upon. If his son lift up his hand against him, he doth not place his hope in that, that that occasion will cut off his son, and that then the people's hearts which were bent upon his son, will return to him again. David knew he could not retire himself from God in his bedchamber; guards and ushers could not keep him out. He knew he could not defend himself from God in his army; for *the Lord of Hosts is Lord of his hosts.* If he *fled to sea, to heaven, to hell,* he was sure to meet *God there;* and there thou shalt meet him too, if thou fly from God, to the relief of outward comforts, of music, of mirth, of drink, of cordials, of comedies, of conversation. Not that such recreations are unlawful; the mind hath her physic as well as the body; but when thy sadness proceeds from a sense of thy sins, (which is God's key to the door of his mercy, put into thy hand,) it is a new, and a greater sin, to go about to overcome that holy sadness, with these profane diversions; to fly *ad consolatiunculas creaturalæ* (as that elegant man Luther expresses it, according to his natural delight in that elegancy of diminutives, with which he abounds above all authors) to the little and contemptible comforts of little and contemptible creatures. And as Luther uses the physic, Job useth the physician; Luther calls the comforts, miserable comforts; and Job calls them that minister them, *Onerosos consolatores, Miserable comforters are you all.* David could not drown his adultery in blood; never think thou to drown thine in wine. The ministers

[s] 1 Sam. xvi. 14.

of God are sons of thunder, they are falls of waters, trampling of horses, and runnings of chariots; and if these voices of these ministers, cannot overcome thy music, thy security, yet the angel's trumpet will; that *Surgite qui dormitis, Arise ye that sleep in the dust, in the dust of the grave*, is a treble that over-reaches all; that *Ite maledicti, Go ye accursed into hell fire*, is a bass that drowns all. There is no recourse but to God, no relief but in God; and therefore David applied himself to the right method, to make his first access to God.

It is to God only, and to God by name, and not in general notions; for it implies a nearer, a more familiar, and more presential knowledge of God, a more cheerful acquaintance, and a more assiduous conversation with God, when we know how to call God by a name, a Creator, a Redeemer, a Comforter, than when we consider him only as a diffused power, that spreads itself over all creatures; when we come to him in affirmatives, and confessions, This thou hast done for me, than when we come to him only in negatives, and say, That that is God, which is nothing else. God is come nearer to us than to others, when we know his name. For though it be truly said in the school, that no name can be given to God, *Ejus essentiam adæquate repræsentans*, No one name can reach to the expressing of all that God is; and though Trismegistus do humbly, and modestly, and reverently say, *Non spero*, It never fell into my thought, nor into my hope, that the maker and founder of all Majesty, could be circumscribed, or imprisoned by any one name, though a name compounded and complicated of many names, as the rabbins have made one name of God, of all his names in the Scriptures; though Jacob seemed to have been rebuked *for asking God's name*[3], when he wrestled with him; and so also the angel which was to do a miraculous work, a work appertaining only to God to give a child to the barren, because he represented God, and had the person of God upon him, would not permit Manoah to inquire after his name, *Because*, as he says there, *that name was secret and wonderful*[4]; and though God himself, to dignify and authorize that angel, which he made his commissioner, and the tutelar and national guide of his people, says of that angel, to that

[3] Gen. xxxii. 29. [4] Judges xiii. 18.

people, *Fear him, provoke him not, for my name is in him*[5], and yet did not tell them, what that name was; yet certainly, we could not so much as say, God cannot be named, except we could name God by some name; we could not say, God hath no name except God had a name; for that very word, *God*, is his name. God calls upon us often in the Scriptures, *To call upon his name;* and in the Scriptures he hath manifested to us divers names, by which we may call upon him. Dost thou know what name to call him by, when thou callest him to bear false witness, to aver a falsehood? Hath God a name to swear by? Dost thou know what name to call him by, when thou wouldst make him thy servant, thy instrument, thy executioner, to plague others, upon thy bitter curses and imprecations? Hath God a name to curse by? Canst thou wound his body, exhaust his blood, tear off his flesh, break his bones, excruciate his soul; and all this by his right name? Hath God a name to blaspheme by? and hath God no name to pray by? Is he such a stranger to thee? Dost thou know every fair house in thy way, as thou travellest, whose that is; and dost thou not know, in whose house thou standest now?

Beloved, to know God by name, and to come to him by name, is to consider his particular blessings to thee; to consider him in his power, and how he hath protected thee there; and in his wisdom, and how he hath directed thee there; and in his love, and how he hath affected thee there; and expressed all, in particular mercies. He is but a dark, but a narrow, a shallow, a lazy man in nature, that knows no more, but that there is a heaven, and an earth, and a sea; he that will be of use in this world, comes to know the influences of the heavens, the virtue of the plants, and mines of the earth, the course and divisions of the sea. To the natural man, God gives general notions of himself; a God that spreads over all as the heavens; a God that sustains all as the earth; a God that transports, and communicates all to all as the sea: but to the Christian church, God applies himself in more particular notions; as a Father, as a Son, as a Holy Ghost; and to every Christian soul, as a Creator, a Redeemer, a Benefactor; that I may say, This I was not born to, and yet this I

[5] Exod. xxiii. 20.

have from my God; this a potent adversary sought to evict from me, but this I have recovered by my God; sickness had enfeebled my body, but I have a convalescence; calumny had defamed my reputation, but I have a reparation; malice in other men, or improvidence in myself, had ruined my fortune, but I have a redintegration from my God. And then by these, which are indeed but *cognomina Dei*, his surnames, names of distinction, names of the exercise of some particular properties, and attributes of his, to come to the root of all, to my very being, that my present being in this world, and my eternal being in the next, is made known to me by his name of Jehovah, which is his essential name, to which David had recourse in this exinanition; when his affliction had even annihilated, and brought him to nothing, he fled to Jehovah, the God of all being, which is the foundation of all his other attributes, and includes all his other names, and is our next and last branch in this first part.

This name then of *Jehovah*, which is here translated Lord, is agreed by all to be the greatest name by which God hath declared and manifested himself to man. This is that name which the Jews falsely, but peremptorily, (for falsehood lives by peremptoriness, and feeds and arms itself with peremptoriness) deny ever to have been attributed to the Messiah, in the Scriptures. This is that name, in the virtue and use whereof, those calumniators of our Saviour's miracles do say, That he did his miracles, according to a direction, and schedule, for the true and right pronouncing of that name, which Solomon in his time had made, and Christ in his time had found, and by which, say they, any other man might have done those miracles, if he had had Solomon's directions for the right sounding of this name, Jehovah. This is that name, which out of a superstitious reverence the Jews always forbore to sound, or utter, but ever pronounced some other name, either *Adonai*, or *Elohim*, in the place thereof, wheresoever they found Jehovah. But now their rabbins will not so much as write that name, but still express it in four other letters. So that they dare not, not only not sound it, not say it, but not see it.

How this name which we call Jehovah, is truly to be sounded, because in that language it is expressed in four consonants only,

without vowels, is a perplexed question; we may well be content to be ignorant therein, since our Saviour Christ himself, in all those places which he cited out of the Old Testament, never sounded it; he never said, Jehovah. Nor the apostles after him, nor Origen, nor Jerome; all persons very intelligent in the propriety of language; they never sounded this name Jehovah. For though in St. Jerome's exposition upon the 8th Psalm, we find that word Jehovah, in some editions which we have now, yet it is a clear case, that in the old copies it is not so; in Jerome's mouth it was not so; from Jerome's hand it came not so. Neither doth it appear to me, that ever that name Jehovah was so pronounced, till so late, as in our fathers' time; for I think Petrus Gallatinus was the first that ever called it so. But howsoever this name be to be sounded, that which falls in our consideration at this time, is, that David in his distresses fled presently to God, and to God by name, that is, in consideration and commemoration of his particular blessings; and to a God that had that name, the name Jehovah, the name of Essence and Being, which name carried a confession, that all our well-being, and the very first being itself, was, and was to be derived from him.

David therefore comes to God *in nomine totali; in nomine integrali;* he considers God totally, entirely, altogether; not altogether, that is, confusedly; but altogether, that is, in such a name as comprehends all his attributes, all his power upon the world, and all his benefits upon him. The Gentiles were not able to consider God so; not so entirely, not altogether; but broke God in pieces, and changed God into single money, and made a fragmentary god of every power, and attribute in God, of every blessing from God, nay of every malediction, and judgment of God. A clap of thunder made a Jupiter, a tempest at sea made a Neptune, an earthquake made a Pluto; *fear* came to be a god, and a *fever* came to be a god; everything that they were in love with, or afraid of, came to be canonized, and made a god amongst them. David considered God as a centre, into which and from which all lines flowed. Neither as the Gentiles did, nor as some ignorants of the Roman church do, that there must be a stormy god, St. Nicholas, and a plaguy god, St. Rook, and a sheep-shearing god,

and a swineherd god, a god for every parish, a god for every occupation, God forbid. Acknowledge God to be the author of thy being; find him so at the spring-head, and then thou shalt easily trace him, by the branches, to all that belongs to thy well-being. The Lord of Hosts, and the God of peace, the God of the mountains, and the God of the valleys, the God of noon, and of midnight, of all times, the God of East and West, of all places, the God of princes, and of subjects, of all persons, is all one and the same God; and that which we intend, when we say Jehovah, is all He.

And therefore hath St. Bernard a pathetical and useful meditation to this purpose: Everything in the world, says he, can say, *Creator meus es tu*, Lord thou hast made me; all things that have life, and growth, can say, *Pastor meus es tu*, Lord thou hast fed me, increased me; all men can say, *Redemptor meus es tu*, Lord I was sold to death through original sin, by one Adam, and thou hast redeemed me by another; all that have fallen by infirmity, and risen again by grace, can say, *Susceptor meus es tu*, Lord I was fallen, but thou hast undertaken me, and dost sustain me; but he that comes to God in the name of Jehovah, he means all this, and all other things, in this one petition, Let me have a being, and then I am safe, for *In him we live, and move, and have our being*. If we solicit God as the Lord of Hosts, that he would deliver us from our enemies, perchance he may see it fitter for us to be delivered to our enemies: if we solicit him as Proprietary of all the world, as the beasts upon a thousand mountains are his, as all the gold and silver in the earth is his, perchance he sees that poverty is fitter for us: if we solicit him for health, or long life, he gives life, but he kills too, he heals, but he wounds too; and we may be ignorant which of these, life or death, sickness or health, is for our advantage. But solicit him as Jehovah, for a being, that being which flows from his purpose, that being which he knows fittest for us, and then we follow his own instructions, *Fiat voluntas tua*, Thy will be done upon us, and we are safe.

Now that which Jehovah was to David, Jesus is to us. Man in general hath relation to God, as he is Jehovah, Being; we have relation to Christ, as he is Jesus, our salvation; salvation is

our being, Jesus is our Jehovah. And therefore as David delights himself with that name Jehovah, for he repeats it eight or nine times in this one short Psalm, and though he ask things of a diverse nature at God's hands, though he suffer afflictions, of a diverse nature, from God's hands, yet still he retains that one name, he speaks to God in no other name in all this Psalm but in the name of Jehovah: so in the New Testament, he who may be compared with David, because he was under great sins, and yet in great favour with God, St. Paul, he delights himself with that name of Jesus so much, as that St. Jerome says, *Quæ superflue diligebat, extraordinarie nominavit*, As he loved him excessively, so he named him superabundantly. It is the name that cost God most, and therefore he loves it best; it cost him his life to be a Jesus, a Saviour. The name of Christ which is anointed, he had by office; he was anointed as King, as Priest, as Prophet. All those names which he had in Isaiah, *The Counsellor, the Wonderful, the Prince of Peace*[6], and the name of Jehovah itself, which the Jews deny ever to be given to him, and is evidently given to him in that place, Christ had by nature; but his name of Jesus, a Saviour, he had by purchase, and that purchase cost him his blood. And therefore, as Jacob preferred his name of Israel[7], before his former name of Jacob, because he had that name upon his wrestling with God, and it cost him a lameness; so is the name of Jesus so precious to him who bought it so dearly, that not only every knee bows at the name of Jesus here, but Jesus himself, and the whole Trinity, bow down towards us, to give us all those things which we ask in that name. For even of a devout use of that very name, do some of the fathers interpret that, *Oleum effusum nomen tuum*, That the name of Jesus should be spread as an ointment, breathed as perfume, diffused as a soul over all the petitions of our prayers; as the church concludes for the most part, all her collects so, *Grant this O Lord, for our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus' sake.* And so much does St. Paul abound in the use of this name, as that he repeats it thrice, in the superscription of one of his letters the title of one of his Epistles, his first to Timothy. And with the same devotion, St. Augustine says, even of the name, *Melius*

[6] Isaiah ix. 6. [7] Gen. xxxii. 28.

*est mihi non esse, quam sine Jesu esse*, I were better have no being, than be without Jesus; *Melius est non vivere, quam vivere sine vita*, I were better have no life, than any life without him. For as David could find no being without Jehovah, a Christian finds no life without Jesus. Both these names imply that which is in this text, in our translation, *the Lord*, *Dominus;* to whom only, and entirely we appertain; his we are. And therefore whether we take *Dominus*, to be *do minas*, to threaten, to afflict us, or to be *do manus*, to succour, and relieve us, (as some have pleased themselves with those obvious derivations) as David did still, we must make our recourse to him, from whom, as he is Jehovah, Being, our being, our well-being, our eternal being, our creation, preservation, and salvation is derived; all is from him.

Now when he hath his access to the Lord, to this Lord, the Lord that hath all, and gives all, and is all, the first part of David's prayer, and all his prayer which falls into our text, is but deprecatory; he does but pray that God would forbear him. He pretends no error, he enterprises no reversing of judgment; no; at first, he dares not sue for pardon; he only desires a reprieve, a respite of execution, and that not absolutely neither; but he would not be executed in hot blood; *ne in ira, ne in furore*, not in God's anger, not in his hot displeasure.

First then, *deprecari*, is not *refragari*, to deprecate, is not to contend against a judge, nor to defend one's self against an officer, but it is only in the quality, and in the humility of a petitioner, and suppliant, to beg a forbearance. The martyrs in the primitive church would not do that. *Nihil de causa sua deprecatur, qui nihil de conditione sua miratur*, says Tertullian; and in that he describes a patience of steel, and an invincible temper. He means that the Christians in those times of persecution, did never entreat the judge for favour, because it was not strange to them, to see themselves, whose conversation was in heaven, despised, and contemned, and condemned upon earth: *Nihil mirantur de conditione*, They wondered not at their misery, they thought it a part of their profession, a part of the Christian religion, to suffer, and therefore, *Nihil deprecati de causa*, They never solicited the judge for favour. They had learned by experience of daily tribulation, the apostle's lesson, *Think it not strange*,

*when temptations and tribulations fall;* that is, Make that your daily bread, and you shall never starve, use yourselves to suffering, at least to the expectation, the contemplation of suffering, acquaint yourselves with that, accustom yourselves to that before it come, and it will not be a stranger to you when it comes. Tertullian's method may be right, and it may work that effect in very great afflictions; a man may be so used to them, as that he will not descend to any low deprecation, or suit to be delivered of them. But David's affliction was spiritual; and howsoever, as a natural man, nay, as a devout and religious man, (for even in rectified men there are affections of a middle nature, that participate of nature, and of grace too, and in which the Spirit of God moves, and natural affections move too; for nature and grace do not so destroy one another, as that we should conclude, he hath strong natural affections, therefore he hath no grace) David I say, that might justly wonder at his own condition, and think it strange, that he that put his trust so entirely in God, should so entirely be delivered over to such afflictions, might also justly deprecate, and boldly say, *Ne facias*, O Lord deal not thus with thy servant.

Our Saviour Christ's *Transeat calix*, *Let this cup pass from me*, was a deprecation in his own behalf; and his *Pater dimitte illis*, *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*, was a deprecation in the behalf of his enemies; and so was Stephen's, *Ne statuas illis*, *O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*, a deprecation in the behalf of his executioners. And these deprecations for others, for ourselves, are proposed for our imitation. But for Moses' *Dele me*, Pardon this people, or blot my name out of thy book, and for St. Paul's *anathema*, rather than his brethren should not be saved, let himself be condemned, for such deprecations for others, as were upon the matter, imprecations upon themselves, those may not well be drawn into consequence, or practice; for in Moses and St. Paul themselves, there was, if not an irregularity, and an inordinateness, at least an inconsideration, not to be imitated by us now, not to be excused in them then; but for the prayer that is merely deprecatory, though some have thought it less lawful than the postulatory prayer, because when God is come to the act of afflicting us, he hath then revealed, and declared,

and manifested his will to be such, and against the revealed and manifested will of God we may not pray, yet because his afflictions are not peremptory, but we have ever day to show cause, why that affliction should be taken off, and because all his judgments are conditional, and the condition of every particular judgment is not always revealed to us, and this is always revealed to us, *Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus*, That his mercy is above all his judgments, therefore we may come to that deprecation, that God will make his hand lighter upon us, and his corrections easier unto us.

As the saints in heaven have their *Usque quo*, How long Lord, holy and true, before thou begin to execute judgment? So the saints on earth have their *Usque quo*, How long Lord, before thou take off the execution of this judgment upon us? For, our deprecatory prayers, are not mandatory, they are not directory, they appoint not God his ways, nor his times; but as our postulatory prayers are, they also are submitted to the will of God, and have all in them, that ingredient, that herb of grace, which Christ put into his own prayer, that *Veruntamen, Yet not my will, but thy will be fulfilled;* and they have that ingredient, which Christ put into our prayer, *Fiat voluntas, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;* in heaven there is no resisting of his will; yet in heaven there is a soliciting, a hastening, an accelerating of the judgment, and the glory of the resurrection; so though we resist not his corrections here upon earth, we may humbly present to God, the sense which we have of his displeasure; for this sense, and apprehension of his corrections, is one of the principal reasons, why he sends them; he corrects us therefore, that we might be sensible of his corrections; that when we, being humbled under his hand, have said with his prophet, *I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*[a], he may be pleased to say to his correcting angel, as he did to his destroying angel, *This is enough*, and so burn his rod now, as he put up his sword then.

For though David do, well for himself, and well for our example, deprecate the anger of God, expressed in those judgments, yet we see he spends but one verse of the Psalm in that deprecation. In all the rest he leaves God wholly to his

[a] Micah vii. 9.

pleasure, how far he will extend, or aggravate that judgment; and he turns wholly upon the postulatory part, *That God would have mercy upon him, and save him, and deliver his soul.* And in that one verse, he does not deprecate all afflictions, all corrections. David knows what moves God to correct us; it is not only our illness that moves him; for he corrects us when we are not ill in his sight, but made good by his pardon; but his goodness, as well as our illness, moves him to correct us; if he were not good, not only good in himself, but good to us, he would let us alone, and never correct us. But, *Ideo eos qui errant corripis, quia bonus et suavis es Domine*, as the vulgate reads that place[9], the Lord corrects us, not only as he is good, but as he is gentle; he were more cruel, more unmerciful, if he did always show mercy; that David intends, when he says, *Propitius fuisti*, Thou wast a merciful God, because thou didst punish all their inventions.

So then, our first work is to consider, that that in the prophet, is a promise, and hath the nature of a mercy, *I will correct thee in measure*[10]; where the promise does not fall only upon the measure, but upon the correction itself; and then, since this is a promise, a mercy, a part of our daily bread, we may pray as the same prophet directs us, *O Lord correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger*[11]; where also the petition seems to fall, not only upon the measure, but upon the correction itself; and then, when I have found some correction fit to be prayed for and afforded me by God upon my prayer, if that correction at any time grow heavy, or wearisome unto me, I must relieve myself upon that consideration, *Whether God have smitten me, as he smote them that smote me*[12], whether it be not another manner of execution, which God hath laid upon mine enemies, than that which he hath laid upon me, in having suffered them to be smitten with the spirit of sinful glory, and triumph in their sin, and my misery, and with execration, and obdurateness, with impenitence, and insensibleness of their own case. Or at least, let me consider, as it is in the same place, *Whether I be slain according to the slaughter of them that were slain by me;* that is,

[9] Wisd. xii. 1. [10] Jer. xxx. 11. [11] Psal. x. 24.
[12] Isa. xxvii. 7.

whether my oppression, my extortion, my prevarication have not brought other men to more misery, than God hath yet brought me unto. And if we consider this, as no doubt David did, and find that correction is one loaf of our daily bread, and find in our heaviest corrections, that God hath been heavier upon our enemies, than upon us, and we heavier upon others, than God upon us too, we shall be content with any *rebuke*, and any *chastisement*, so it be not *in anger*, and *in hot displeasure*, which are the words that remain to be considered.

Now these two phrases, *Argui in furore*, and *corripi in ira*, which we translate, *To rebuke in anger*, and *to chasten in hot displeasure*, are by some thought, to signify one and the same thing, that David intends the same thing, and though in divers words, yet words of one and the same signification. But with reverence to those men, (for some of them are men to whom much reverence is due) they do not well agree with one another, nor very constantly with themselves. St. Jerome says, *Furor et ira maxime unum sunt*, That this *anger*, and *hot displeasure*, are merely, absolutely, entirely, one and the same thing, and yet he says, that this anger is executed in this world, and this hot displeasure reserved for the world to come. And this makes a great difference; no weight of God's whole hand here, can be so heavy, as any finger of his in hell; the highest exaltation of God's anger in this world, can have no proportion to the least spark of that in hell; nor a furnace seven times' heat here, to the embers there. So also St. Augustine thinks, that these two words, to *rebuke*, and to *chasten*, do not differ at all; or if they do, that the latter is the lesser. But this is not likely to be David's method, first to make a prayer for the greater, and that being granted, to make a second prayer for the lesser, included in that which was asked, and granted before. A later man in the Roman church[13], allows the words to differ, and the latter to be the heavier, but then he refers both to the next life; that *to rebuke in anger*, should be intended of purgatory, and of a short continuance there, and to be *chastened in hot displeasure*, should be intended of hell, and of everlasting condemnation there. And so David must make his first petition, *Rebuke me not in thine anger*, to this pur-

[13] Ayguanus.

pose, Let me pass at my death immediately to heaven, without touching at any fire, and his second petition, *Chasten me not in thy hot displeasure* to this purpose, If I must touch at any fire, let it be but purgatory, and not hell.

But by the nature, and propriety, and the use of all these words in the Scriptures, it appears, that the words are of a different signification, which St. Jerome it seems did not think; and that the last is the heaviest, which St. Augustine it seems did not think; and then, that they are to be referred to this life, which Ayguanus did not think. For the words themselves, all our three translations retain the two first words, to *rebuke* and to *chasten*; neither that which we call the *Bishops' Bible*, nor that which we call the *Geneva Bible*, and that which we may call the *King's*, depart from those two first words. But then for the other two, *anger* and *hot displeasure*, in them all three translations differ. The first calls them *indignation* and *displeasure*, the second *anger* and *wrath*, and the last *anger* and *hot displeasure*.

To begin with the first, to be *rebuked* was but to be chidden, but to be *chastened*, was to be beaten; and yet David was heartily afraid of the first, of the least of them, when it was to be done in anger: this word that is here to rebuke, *Jacach*, is for the most part, to reprove, to convince by way of argument, and disputation. So it is in Esay, *Come now, and let us reason together*[14], says God. The natural man is confident in his reason, in his philosophy; and yet God is content to join in that issue. If he do not make it appear, even to your reason, that he is God, *Choose whom ye will serve*, as Joshua speaks; if he do not make it appear, that he is a good God, change him for any other god that your reason can present to be better. In Micah, the word hath somewhat more vehemence; *The Lord hath a quarrel against his people, and he will plead with Israel*[15]. This is more than a disputation; it is a suit. God can maintain his possession other ways; without suit; but he will recover us, by matter of record, openly, and in the face of the country; he will put us to a shame, and to an acknowledgment, of having disloyally divested our allegiance. Yea, the word hath sometimes somewhat more sharpness than this; for in the book of Proverbs,

[14] Isa. i. 18. [15] Micah vi. 2.

it comes to correction, *The Lord correcteth him whom he loveth, even as the father doth the child, in whom he delighteth.* Though it be a fatherly correction, yet it is a correction; and that is more than the reasoning or disputing, more than the sueing or impleading.

Now though all this, disputing, impleading, correcting, in St. Augustine's interpretation, amount but to an instruction, and an amendment, yet says he of David, *In ira emendari non vult, erudiri non vult*, He is loath to fall into God's hands, loath to come into God's fingers at all, when God is angry; he would not be disputed withal, not impleaded, not corrected, no, not instructed, not amended by God in his anger. The anger of God is such a pedagogue, such a catechism, such a way of teaching, as the law was. *Lex pædagogus;* the law is a schoolmaster, says the apostle; but *litera occidit*, the law is such a schoolmaster, as brings not a rod, but a sword. God's anger should instruct us, but if we use it not aright, it hardens us. And therefore, *Kiss the Son lest he be angry*[16], says David, and what is the danger if he be? that which follows, *Lest ye perish in the way;* though his anger be one of his ways, yet it is such a way, as you may easily stumble in; and, as you would certainly perish without that way, so you may easily perish in that way. For when a sinner considers himself to be under the anger of God, naturally he conceives such a horror, as puts him further off. As soon as Adam heard the voice of God, and in an accent of anger, or as he tuned it in his guilty conscience, to an accent of anger, (for as a malicious man will turn a sermon to a satire, and a panegyric to a libel, so a despairing soul will set God's comfortablest words, to a sad tune, and force a *væ* even in God's *euge*, and find anger, and everlasting anger in every access, in every action of God) when Adam heard God but walking in the garden, but the noise of his going, and approaching towards him, (for God had then said nothing to him, not so much as called him) Adam fled from his presence and hid himself amongst the trees. When the guilty man was but spoken to, and spoken to mildly, by the master of the marriage feast, *Amice quomodo intrasti? Friend how came you in?* we see he was presently *speechless*, and

[16] Psal. ii. 12.

being so, not able to speak, to come to any confession, any excuse, he fell further and further into displeasure, till he was bound hand and foot, and cast irrecoverably away. For *Si repente interroget, quis respondebit ei*[17]? If God surprise a conscience with a sudden question, if God deprehend a man in the act of his sin, and while he accomplishes and consummates that sin, say to his soul, Why dost thou this, upon which mine anger hangs! there God speaks to that sinner, but he confounds him with the question; it is not a leading interrogatory, it gives him no light to answer, till God's anger be out of his contemplation, he cannot so much as say *Domine vim patior, responde pro me*[18], O Lord I am oppressed, do thou answer for me; do thou say to thyself for me, *My spirit shall not always strive with man, because he is but flesh*[19]. If the Lord come in anger, if he speak in anger, if he do but look in anger, a sinner perishes; *Aspexit et dissolvit gentes;* He did but look, and he dissolved, he melted the nations; he poured them out as water upon the dust, and he blew them away as dust into the sea, *The everlasting mountains were broken, and the ancient hills did bow*[20].

It is not then the disputing, not the impleading, not the correcting, which this word *Jacach* imports, that David declines, or deprecates here, but that anger, which might change the nature of all, and make all the physic poison, all that was intended for our mollifying, to advance our obduration. For when there was no anger in the case, David is a forward scholar, to hearken to God's reasoning, and disputing, and a tractable client, and easy defendant, to answer to God's suit, and impleading, and an obsequious patient, to take any physic at his hands, if there were no anger in the cup. *Ure renes et cor meum*, says David[21], he provokes God with all those emphatical words, *Judge me, prove me, try me, examine me*, and more, *ure renes*, bring not only a candle to search, but even fire, to melt me; but upon what confidence all this? *For thy loving kindness is ever before mine eyes.* If God's anger, and not his loving kindness had been before his eyes, it had been a fearful apparition, and a dangerous issue to have gone upon. So also he surrenders himself entirely to God

[17] Job ix. 12. [18] Isa. xxxviii. 14. [19] Gen. vi. 3.
[20] Hab. iii. 6. [21] Psal. xxvi. 1.

in another psalm, *Try me O God, and know my heart; prove me, and know my thoughts, and consider, if there be any way of wickedness in me.* But how concludes he? *And lead me in the right way for ever*[22]. As long as I have God by the hand, and feel his loving care of me, I can admit any weight of his hand; any furnace of his heating. Let God mould me, and then melt me again, let God make me, and then break me again, as long as he establishes and maintains a rectified assurance in my soul, that at last he means to make me a vessel of honour, to his glory, howsoever he rebuke or chastise me, yet he will not *rebuke me in anger*, much less *chasten me in hot displeasure*, which is the last, and the heaviest thing, that David deprecates in this prayer.

Both these words, which we translate to *chasten*, and *hot displeasure*, are words of a heavy, and of a vehement signification. They extend both to express the eternity of God's indignation, even to the binding of the soul and body in eternal chains of darkness. For the first, *Jasar*, signifies oftentimes in the Scriptures, *vincire*, to bind, often with ropes, often with chains; to fetter, or manacle, or pinion men, that are to be executed; so that it imports a slavery, a bondage all the way, and a destruction at last. And so the word is used by Rehoboam, *My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions*[23]. And then, the other word, *Camath*, doth not only signify *hot displeasure*, but that effect of *God's hot displeasure*, which is intended by the prophet Esay, *Therefore hath he poured forth his fierce wrath, and the strength of battle, and that set him on fire round about, and he knew it not, and it burnt him up, and he considered it not*[24]. These be the fearful conditions of God's hot displeasure, to be in a furnace, and not to feel it; to be in a habit of sin, and not know what leads us into temptation; to be burnt to ashes, and so not only without all moisture, all holy tears, but, as ashes, without any possibility, that any good thing can grow in us. And yet this word, *camath*, hath a heavier signification than this; for it signifies poison itself, destruction itself, for so it is twice taken in one verse, *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent*[25]; so that this *hot displeasure*,

[22] Psal. cxxxix. 23. [23] 1 Kings xii. 11. [24] Esay xlii. ult.
[25] Psal. lviii. 4.

is that poison of the soul, obduration here, and that extension of this obduration, a final impenitence in this life, and an infinite impenitibleness in the next, to die without any actual penitence here, and live without all possibility of future penitence for ever hereafter.

David therefore foresees, that if God *rebuke in anger*, it will come to a *chastening in hot displeasure*. For what should stop him? For, *if a man sin against the Lord, who will plead for him?* says Eli[26]; *Plead thou my cause*, says David; it is only the Lord, that can be of counsel with him, and plead for him; and that Lord, is both the judge, and angry too. So David's prayer hath this force, *Rebuke me not in anger*, for though I were able to stand under that, yet thou wilt also *chasten me in thine hot displeasure*, and that no soul can bear; for as long as God's anger lasts, so long he is going on towards our utter destruction. In that state, (it is not a state) in that exinanition, in that annihilation of the soul, (it is not an annihilation, the soul is not so happy as to come to nothing) but in that misery, which can no more receive a name, than an end, all God's corrections are borne with grudging, with murmuring, with comparing our righteousness with other's righteousness; in Job's impatience, *Quare posuisti me contrarium tibi? Why hast thou set me up as a mark against thee, O thou preserver of men*[27]? Thou that preservest other men, *hast bent thy bow, and made me a mark for thine arrows*[28], says the Lamentation: in that state we cannot cry to him, that he might answer us; if we do cry, and he answer, we cannot hear; if we do hear, we cannot believe that it is he. *Cum invocantem exaudierit*, says Job, *If I cry, and he answer, yet I do not believe that he heard my voice*[29]. We had rather perish utterly, than stay his leisure in recovering us. *Si flagellat, occidat semel*, says Job in the vulgate, *If God have a mind to destroy me, let him do it at one blow*[30]; *Et non de pœnis rideat, Let him not sport himself with misery*. Whatsoever come after, we would be content to be out of this world, so we might but change our torment, whether it be a temporal calamity that oppresses our state or body, or a spiritual burden, a perplexity that sinks our under-

[26] 1 Sam. ii. 25. [27] Job vii. 20. [28] Lam. iii. 12.
[29] Job ix. 16. [30] Ver. 23.

standing, or a guiltiness that depresses our conscience. *Ut in inferno protegas*, as Job also speaks, *O that thou wouldest hide me*[81], *In inferno, in the grave*, says the afflicted soul, but *in inferno, in hell* itself, says the despairing soul, rather than keep me in this torment, in this world!

This is the miserable condition, or danger, that David abhors, and deprecates in this text, *To be rebuked in anger*, without any purpose in God to amend him; and *to be chastened in his hot displeasure;* so, as that we can find no interest in the gracious promises of the Gospel, no conditions, no power of revocation in the severe threatenings of the law; no difference between those torments which have attacked us here, and the everlasting torments of hell itself. That we have lost all our joy in this life, and all our hope of the next; that we would fain die, though it were by our own hands, and though that death do but unlock us a door, to pass from one hell into another. This is *Ira tua Domine, et furor tuus, Thy anger, O Lord*, and, *thy hot displeasure*. For as long as it is but *ira patris*, the anger of my father, which hath disinherited me, gold is thine, and silver is thine, and thou canst provide me. As long as it is but *ira regis*, some misinformation to the king, some misapprehension in the king, *Cor regis in manu tua, The king's heart is in thy hand*, and thou canst rectify it again. As long as it is but *furor febris*, the rage and distemper of a pestilent fever, or *furor furoris*, the rage of madness itself, thou wilt consider me, and accept me, and reckon with me according to those better times, before those distempers overtook me, and overthrew me. But when it comes to be *Ira tua, furor tuus, Thy anger*, and *thy displeasure*, as David did, so let every Christian find comfort, if he able to say faithfully this verse, this text, *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure;* for as long as he can pray against it, he is not yet so fallen under it, but that he hath yet his part in all God's blessings, which we shed upon the congregation in our sermons, and which we seal to every soul in the sacrament of reconciliation.

[81] Job xiv. 13.

# SERMON XLIX.

## *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

Psalm vi. 2, 3.

**Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed: my soul is also sore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long?**

This whole Psalm is prayer; and the whole prayer is either deprecatory, as in the first verse, or postulatory. Something David would have forborne, and something done. And in that postulatory part of David's prayer, which goes through six verses of this Psalm, we consider the petitions, and the inducements; what David asks, and why: of both which, there are some mingled, in these two verses, which constitute our text. And therefore, in them, we shall necessarily take knowledge of some of the petitions, and some of the reasons. For, in the prayer, there are five petitions; first, *Miserere*, *Have mercy upon me*, think of me, look graciously towards me, prevent me with thy mercy; and then *Sana me*, *O Lord*, *heal me*, thou didst create me in health, but my parents begot me in sickness, and I have complicated other sicknesses with that, actual with original sin, O Lord, heal me, give me physic for them; and thirdly, *Convertere*, *Return*, *O Lord*, thou didst visit me in nature, return in grace, thou didst visit me in baptism, return in the other sacrament, thou dost visit me now, return at the hour of my death; and, in a fourth petition, *Eripe*, *O Lord*, *deliver my soul*, every blessing of thine because a snare unto me, and thy benefits I make occasions of sin, in all conversation, and even in my solitude, I admit such temptations from others, or I produce such temptations in myself, as that, whensoever thou art pleased to return to me, thou findest me at the brink of some sin, and therefore *Eripe me*, O Lord, take hold of me, and deliver me; and lastly, *Salvum me fac*, *O Lord*, *save me*, manifest thy good purpose upon me so, that I may never be shaken, or never overthrown in the faithful hope of that salvation, which thou hast preordained for me. These are the five petitions of the prayer,

and two of the five, the *Miserere, Have mercy upon me*, and the *Sana, O Lord, heal me*, are in these two verses. And then, the reasons of the prayer, arising partly out of himself, and partly out of God; and some being mixed, and growing out of both roots together, some of the reasons of the first nature, that is, of those that arise out of himself, are also in this text.

Therefore in this text, we shall consider, first the extent of those two petitions that are in it, *Quid miserere*, what David intends by this prayer, *Have mercy upon me*, and then, *Quid sana me*, what he intends by that, *O Lord, heal me*. And secondly, we shall consider the strength of those reasons, which are in our text, *Quia infirmus*, why God should be moved to mercy with that, because David was weak, and then *Quia turbata ossa*, Why, because his bones were vexed; and again, *Quia turbata anima valde*, Because his soul was sore vexed. And in a third consideration, we shall also see, that for all our petitions, for mercy, and for spiritual health, and for all our reasons, weakness, vexation of bones, and sore vexation of the soul itself, God doth not always come to a speedy remedy, but puts us to our *Usque quo, But thou, O Lord, how long? How long wilt thou delay?* And then lastly, that how long soever that be, yet we are still to attend his time, still to rely upon him; which is intimated in this, that David changes not his master, but still applies himself to the Lord; with that name, that he begun with in the first verse, he proceeds; and thrice in these few words he calls upon him by this name of essence, Jehovah, *O Lord have mercy upon me, O Lord heal me, O Lord how long wilt thou delay?* He is not weary of attending the Lord, he is not inclinable to turn upon any other than the Lord; *have mercy upon me, O Lord*, &c.

First then in our first part, that part of David's postulatory prayer in this text, *have mercy upon me*, this mercy that David begs here, is not that mercy of God which is above all his works; for those works which follow it, are above it; *to heal him*, in this text, *to return to him, to deliver his soul, to save him*, in the next verses, are greater works than this, which he calls here in that general name of mercy. For this word *chanan* used in this place, is not *Dele iniquitates*, Have mercy upon me so, as to blot out all mine iniquities; it is not *Dimitte debita*, Have mercy

upon me so, as to forgive all my sins; but it is only *Des mihi gratiam*, Lord shed some drops of grace upon me, or as Tremellius hath it, *Gratiosus sis mihi*, Be a gracious Lord unto me. For this word is used, where Noah is said *to have found grace in the eyes of the Lord*[1]; which grace was, that God had provided for his bodily preservation in the ark. And this word is used, not only of God towards men, but also of men towards God; when they express their zeal towards God's house, and the compassion, and holy indignation which they had of the ruins thereof, they express it in this word, *Thy servants delight in the stones of Zion, et miserti sunt pulveris ejus, They had mercy, they had compassion upon the dust and rubbish thereof*[2]. So that here this *miserere mei*, which is the first groan of a sick soul, the first glance of the soul directed towards God, imports only this, Lord turn thy countenance towards me, Lord bring me to a sense that thou art turned towards me, Lord bring me within such a distance, as my soul may feel warmth and comfort in the rising of that sun; *miserere mei*, look graciously upon me.

At the first meeting of Isaac and Rebecca, he was gone out to meditate in the fields, and she came riding that way, with his father's man, who was employed in making that marriage; and when upon asking, she knew that it was he who was to be her husband, *she took a veil and covered her face*, says that story[3]. What freedom, and nearness soever they were to come to after, yet there was a modesty, and a bashfulness, and a reservedness required before; and her first kindness should be but to be seen. A man would be glad of a good countenance from her that shall be his, before he ask her whether she will be his or no; a man would be glad of a good countenance from his prince, before he intend to press him with any particular suit: and a sinner may be come to this *miserere mei Domine*, to desire that the Lord would think upon him, that the Lord would look graciously towards him, that the Lord would refresh him with the beams of his favour, before he have digested his devotion into a formal prayer, or entered into a particular consideration, what his necessities are.

[1] Gen. vi. 8. [2] Psalm cii. 14. [3] Gen. xxiv. 63.

Upon those words of the apostle[4], *I exhort you that supplications, and prayers, and intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men*, St. Bernard[5] makes certain gradations, and steps, and ascensions of the soul in prayer, and intimates thus much, that by the grace of God's spirit inanimating and quickening him, (without which grace he can have no motion at all) a sinner may come *ad supplicationes*, which is St. Paul's first step, to supplications, which are *à suppliciis*, that out of a sense of some judgment, some punishment, he may make his recourse to God; and then, by a further growth in that grace, he may come *adoratienes*, which are *oris rationes*, the particular expressing of his necessities, with his mouth; and a faithful assurance of obtaining them, in his prayer; and after, he may come farther, *ad intercessicnes*, to an intercession, to such an interest in God's favour, as that he durst put himself betwixt God and other men, as Abraham in the behalf of Sodom, to intercede for them, with a holy confidence that God would do good to them, for his sake; and to a farther step than these, which the apostle may intend in that last, *ad gratiarum actiones*, to a continual thanksgiving, that by reason of God's benefits multiplied upon him, he find nothing to ask, but his thanksgivings, and his acknowledgments, for former blessings, possess and fill all his prayers; though he be grown up to this strength of devotion, to supplications, to prayers, to intercessions, to thanksgivings, yet, says St. Bernard, at first, when he comes first to deprehend himself in a particular sin, or in a course of sin, he comes *verecundo affectu*, bashfully, shamefastly, tremblingly; he knows not what to ask, he dares ask no particular thing at God's hand; but though he be not come yet, to particular requests, for pardon of past sins, nor for strength against future, not to a particular consideration of the weight of his sins, nor to a comparison betwixt his sin, and the mercy of God, yet he comes to a *miserere mei Domine*, to a sudden ejaculation, O Lord be merciful unto me, how dare I do this in the sight of my God?

It is much such an affection as is sometimes in a felon taken in the manner, or in a condemned person brought to execution: one desires the justice to be good to him, and yet he sees not how

[4] 1 Tim. ii. 1. [5] De quatuor modis orandi.

he can bail him; the other desires the sheriff to be good to him, and yet he knows he must do his office. A sinner desires God to have mercy upon him, and yet he hath not descended to particular considerations requisite in that business. But yet this spiritual malefactor is in better case, than the temporal are; they desire them to be good to them, who can do them no good; but God is still able, and still ready to reprieve them, and to put off the execution of his judgments, which execution were to take them out of this world under the guiltiness, and condemnation of unrepented sins. And therefore, as St. Basil says, *In scala, prima ascensio est ab humo*, He that makes but one step up a stair, though he be not got much nearer to the top of the house, yet he is got from the ground, and delivered from the foulness, and dampness of that; so in this first step of prayer, *miserere mei*, O Lord be merciful unto me, though a man be not established in heaven, yet he is stept from the world, and the miserable comforters thereof; *He that committeth sin, is of the devil*[6]: yea, he is of him, in a direct line, and in the nearest degree; he is the offspring, the son of the devil; *Ex patre vestro estis*, says Christ, *You are of your father the devil*[7].

Now, *Qui se à maligni patris affinitate submoverit*[8], He that withdraws himself from such a father's house, though he be not presently come to means to live of himself, *Quam feliciter patre suo orbatus!* How blessed, how happy an orphan is he become! How much better shall he find it, to be fatherless in respect of such a father, than masterless in respect of such a Lord, as he turns towards in this first ejaculation, and general application of the soul, *Miserere mei*, *Have mercy upon me, O Lord*, so much mercy, as to look graciously towards me! And therefore, as it was, by infinite degrees, a greater work, to make earth of nothing, than to make the best creatures of earth; so in the regeneration of a sinner, when he is to be made up a new creature, his first beginning, his first application of himself to God, is the hardest matter. But though he come not presently to look God fully in the face, nor conceive not presently an assurance of an established reconciliation, a fulness of pardon, a cancelling of all former debts, in an instant, though he dare not come to touch God, and

[6] 1 John iii. 8. [7] John viii. 44. [8] Basil.

lay hold of himself, by receiving his body and blood in the sacrament, yet the evangelist calls thee to a contemplation of much comfort to thy soul, in certain preparatory accesses, and approaches. *Behold*, says he; that is, Look up, and consider thy pattern: *Behold, a woman diseased came behind Christ, and touched the hem of his garment; for she said in herself, If I may but touch the hem of his garment only, I shall be whole*[9]. She knew there was virtue to come out of his body, and she came as near that, as she durst: she had a desire to speak; but she went no farther, but to speak to herself; *she said to herself*, says that Gospel, *if I may but touch*, &c. But Christ Jesus supplied all, performed all on his part, abundantly. *Presently he turned about*, says the text: and this was not a transitory glance, but a full sight, and exhibiting of himself to the fruition of her eye, that she might see him. *He saw her*, says St. Matthew: her, he did not direct himself upon others, and leave out her; and then, he spake to her, to overcome her bashfulness; he called her *daughter*, to overcome her diffidence; he bids her *be of comfort*, for she had met a more powerful physician, than those, upon whom she had spent her time, and her estate; one that could cure her; one that would; one that had already; for so he says presently, *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* From how little a spark, how great a fire? From how little a beginning, how great a proceeding? She desired but the hem of his garment, and had all him.

Beloved in him, his power, and his goodness ended not in her; *All that were sick were brought, that they might but touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched it, were made whole*[10]. It was far from a perfect faith, that made them whole; to have a desire to touch his garment, seems not, was not much: neither was that desire that was, always in themselves, but in them that brought them. But yet, come thou so far: come, or be content to be brought, to be brought by example, to be brought by a statute, to be brought by curiosity, come any way to touch the hem of his garment, yea the hem of his servant, of Aaron's garment, and thou shalt participate of the sweet ointment, which flows from the head to the hem of the garment. Come to the house of God, his church; join with the congregation of the

[9] Matt. ix. 20. [10] Matt. xiv. 36.

saints; love the body, and love the garments, too, that is, the order, the discipline, the decency, the unity of the church; love even the hem of the garment, that that almost touches the ground; that is, such ceremonies, as had a good use in their first institution, for raising devotion, and are freed and purged from that superstition, which, as a rust, was grown upon them, though they may seem to touch the earth, that is, to have been induced by earthly men, and not immediate institutions from God, yet love that hem of that garment, those outward assistances of devotion in the church.

Bring with thee a disposition to incorporate thyself with God's people here; and though thou beest not yet come to a particular consideration of thy sins, and of the remedies, though that spirit that possesses thee, that sin that governs thee, lie still awhile, and sleep under all the thunders, which we denounce from this place, so that for awhile thou beest not moved nor affected with all that is said, yet *Appropinquas, et nescis*, (as St. Augustine said, when he came only out of curiosity to hear St. Ambrose preach at Milan) thou dost come nearer and nearer to God, though thou discern it not, and at one time or other, this blessed exorcism, this holy charm, this ordinance of God, the word of God in the mouth of his servant, shall provoke and awaken that spirit of security in thee, and thou shalt feel him begin to storm, and at first that spirit, thy spirit, will say to the spirit of the preacher, *Tune qui conturbas? Art thou he that troublest Israel*[11]? (as Ahab said to Elijah) Art thou he that troublest the peace of my conscience, and the security of my ways? And, when the Spirit of God shall search farther and farther, even *ad occulta*, to thy secretest sins, and touch upon them, and that that spirit of disobedience, when he feels this powerful exorcism, shall say in thee, and cry as Ahab also did, *Invenisti me? Hast thou found me, O mine enemy*[12]? God shall answer, *Inveni te, I have found thee*, and found that thou hadst *sold thyself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord*, and so shall bring thee to a more particular consideration of thine estate, and from thy having joined with the church, in a *Dominus miserebitur Sion*, in an assurance, and acknowledgment, *that the Lord will arise, and have mercy upon*

[11] 1 Kings xviii. 17. [12] 1 Kings xxi. 20.

*Sion* [13], that is, of his whole Catholic church, and then come to a *Dominus misereatur nostri, God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us* [14], upon us that are met here, according to his ordinance, and in confidence of his promise, upon this congregation, of which thou makest thyself a part, thou wilt also come to this of David here, *Domine miserere mei, Have mercy upon me*, me in particular, and thou shalt hear God answer thee, *Miserans miserebor tibi*, With great mercy will I have mercy upon thee; upon thee; *For, with him is plentiful redemption;* mercy for his whole church, mercy for this whole congregation, mercy for every particular soul, that makes herself a part of the congregation. Accustom thyself therefore to a general devotion, to a general application, to general ejaculations towards God, upon every occasion, and then, as a wedge of gold, that comes to be coined into particular pieces of current money, the Lord shall stamp his image upon all thy devotions, and bring thee to particular confessions of thy sins, and to particular prayers, for thy particular necessities. And this we may well conceive and admit to be the nature of David's first prayer, *Miserere mei, Have mercy upon me;* and then, the reason, upon which this first petition is grounded, (for so it will be fittest to handle the parts, first the prayer, and then the reason) is, *Quia infirmus, Have mercy upon me, for I am weak.*

First then, how imperfect, how weak soever our prayers be, yet still if it be a prayer, it hath a *quia*, a reason, upon which it is grounded. It hath in it, some implied, some interpretative consideration of ourselves, how it becomes us to ask that, which we do ask at God's hand, and it hath some implied, and interpretative consideration of God, how it conduces to God's glory to grant it: for that prayer is very far from faith, which is not made so much as with reason; with a consideration of some possibility, and some conveniency in it. *Every man that says Lord, Lord, enters not into heaven;* every *Lord, Lord*, that is said, enters not into heaven, but vanishes in the air. A prayer must be with a serious purpose to pray; for else, those fashional and customary prayers, are but false fires without shot, they batter not heaven; it is but an interjection, that slips in; it is but a parenthesis,

[13] Psalm cii. 13. [14] Psalm lxvii. 1.

that might be left out, whatsoever is uttered in the manner of a prayer, if it have not a *quia*, a reason, a ground for it. And therefore when our Saviour Christ gave us that form of prayer, which includes all, he gave us it in a form of a reason too, *Quia tuum*, *For thine is the kingdom*, &c. It were not a prayer, to say, *Adveniat regnum*, *Thy kingdom come*, if it were not grounded upon that faithful assurance, that God hath a kingdom here; nor to say *Sanctificetur nomen*, *Hallowed be thy name*, if he desired not to be glorified by us; nor to ask *daily bread*, nor *forgiveness of sins*, but for the *quia potestas*, because he hath all these in his power. We consider this first access to God, *Miserere mei*, *Have mercy upon me*, to be but a kind of imperfect prayer, but the first step; but it were none at all, if it had no reason, and therefore it hath this, *Quia infirmus*, *Because I am weak.*

This reason of our own weakness is a good motive for mercy, if in a desire of farther strength we come to that of Lazarus' sisters, to Christ, *Ecce*, *quam amas*, *infirmatur*[15], Behold Lord, that soul that thou lovest, and hast died for, is weak, and languishes. Christ answered then, *Non est infirmitas ad mortem*, *This weakness is not unto death*, *but that the Son of God might be glorified.* He will say so to thee too; if thou present thy weakness with a desire of strength from him, he will say, *Quare moriemini*, *domus Israel?* Why will ye die of this disease? *Gratia mea sufficit;* You may recover for all this; you may repent, you may abstain from this sin, you may take this spiritual physic, the word, the sacraments, if you will; *Tantummodo robustus esto*, (as God says to Joshua) Only be valiant, and fight against it, and thou shalt find strength grow in the use thereof. But for the most part, *De infirmitate blandimur*[16], says St. Bernard, We flatter ourselves with an opinion of weakness; *Et ut liberius peccemus*, *libenter infirmamur*, We are glad of this natural and corrupt weakness, that we may impute all our licentiousness to our weakness, and natural infirmity. But did that excuse Adam, (says that father) *Quod per uxorem tanquam per carnis infirmitatem peccavit*, That he took his occasion of sinning from his weaker part, from his wife? *Quia infirmus*, That thou

[15] John xi. 3. [16] De gradibus humilitatis.

art weak of thyself, is a just motive to induce God to bring thee to himself; *Qui vere portavit languores tuos*, Who hath surely borne all thine infirmities[17]; but to leave him again, when he hath brought thee, to refuse so light and easy yoke as his is; not to make use of that strength which he by his grace offers thee, this is not the affection of the spouse, *languor amantis*, when the person languishes for the love of Christ, but it is *languor amoris*, when the love of Christ languishes in that person. And therefore if you be come so far with David, as to this *miserere quia infirmus*, that an apprehension of your own weakness have brought you to him, in a prayer for mercy, and more strength, go forward with him still, to his next petition, *Sana me, O Lord heal me*, for God is always ready to build upon his own foundations, and accomplish his own beginnings.

*Acceptus in gratiam, hilariter veni ad postulationes:* When thou art established in favour, thou mayest make any suit; when thou art possessed of God by one prayer, thou mayest offer more. This is an encouragement which that father St. Bernard gives, in observing the diverse degrees of praying, that though *Servandæ humilitatis gratiæ, divina pietas ordinavit*, To make his humility the more profitable to him, God imprints in an humble and penitent sinner, this apprehension, *Ut quanto plus profecit, eo minus se reputet profecisse*, That the more he is in God's favour, the more he fears he is not so, or the more he fears to lose that favour, because it is a part, and a symptom of the working of the grace of God, to make him see his own unworthiness, the more manifestly, the more sensibly, yet, it is a religious insinuation, and a circumvention that God loves, when a sinner husbands his graces so well, as to grow rich under him, and to make his thanks for one blessing, a reason, and an occasion of another; so to gather upon God by a rolling trench, and by a winding stair, as Abraham gained upon God, in the behalf of Sodom; for this is an act of the wisdom of the serpent, which our Saviour recommends unto us, in such a serpentine line, (as the artists call it) to get up to God, and get into God by such degrees, as David does here, from his *miserere*, to a *sana*, from a gracious look, to a perfect recovery; from the act of the Levite that looked upon

[17] Isaiah liii. 4.

the wounded man, to the act of the Samaritan that undertook his cure[18]; from desiring God to visit him as a friend, (as *Abraham was called the friend of God*[19]) to study him as a physician. Because the prophet Esay makes a proclamation in Christ's name, *Ho, every one that thirsteth*[20], &c. And because the same prophet says of him, *Vere portavit, He hath truly borne upon himself* (and therefore taken away from us) *all our diseases*[21], Tertullian says elegantly, that Esay presents Christ, *Prædicatorem, et Medicatorem*, As a Preacher, and as a Physician; indeed he is a physician both ways; in his word, and in his power, and therefore in that notion only, as a Physician, David presents him here.

Now physicians say, That man hath in his constitution, in his complexion, a natural virtue, which they call *Balsamum suum*, His own balsamum, by which any wound which a man could receive in his body would cure itself, if it could be kept clean from the annoyances of the air, and all extrinsic incumbrances. Something that hath some proportion and analogy to this balsamum of the body, there is in the soul of man too: the soul hath *nardum suum*, her spikenard, as the spouse says, *Nardus mea dedit odorem suum*[22], She had a spikenard, a perfume, a fragrancy, a sweet savour in herself. For, *Virtutes germanius attingunt animam, quam corpus sanitas*[23], Virtuous inclinations, and a disposition to moral goodness, is more natural to the soul of man, and nearer of kin to the soul of man, than health is to the body. And then, if we consider bodily health, *Nulla oratio, nulla doctrinæ formula nos docet morbum odiisse*, says that father: There needs no art, there needs no outward eloquence, to persuade a man, to be loath to be sick: *Ita in anima inest naturalis, et citra doctrinam mali evitatio*, says he: So the soul hath a natural and untaught hatred, and detestation of that which is evil. The church at thy baptism doth not require sureties at thy hands, for this: thy sureties undertake to the church in thy behalf, That thou shalt forsake the flesh, the world, and the devil, that thou shalt believe all the articles of our religion, that thou shalt keep all the commandments of God; but for this knowledge and de-

[18] Luke x. [19] James ii. 23. [20] Isaiah LI. 1.
[21] Isaiah LIII. 4. [22] Cant. i. 12. [23] Basil.

testation of evil, they are not put to undertake them then, neither doth the church catechize thee in that after: for the sum of all those duties which concern the detestation of evil, consists in that unwritten law of thy conscience which thou knowest naturally. *Scis quod boni proximo faciendum*, says that father, Naturally thou knowest what good thou art bound to do to another man; *Idem enim est, quod ab aliis tute tibi fieri velis;* For it is but asking thyself, what thou wouldst that that other man should do unto thee: *Non ignoras quid sit ipsum malum*, Thou canst not be ignorant, what evil thou shouldst abstain from offering to another, *Est enim quod ab alio fieri nolis*, It is but the same, which thou thinkest another should not put upon thee. So that the soul of man hath in it *balsamum suum, nardum suum*, a medicinal balsamum, a fragrant spikenard in herself, a natural disposition to moral goodness, as the body hath to health. But therein lies the soul's disadvantage, that whereas the causes that hinder the cure of a bodily wound, are extrinsic offences of the air, and putrefaction from thence, the causes in the wounds of the soul, are intrinsic, so as no other man can apply physic to them; nay, they are hereditary, and there was no time early enough for ourselves to apply anything by way of prevention, for the wounds were as soon as we were, and sooner; here was a new soul, but an old sore; a young child, but an inveterate disease. As St. Augustine cannot conceive any interim, any distance, between the creating of the soul, and the infusing of the soul into the body, but eases himself upon that, *Creando infundit*, and *infundendo creat*, The creation is the infusion, and the infusion is the creation, so we cannot conceive any interim, any distance, between the infusing and the sickening, between the coming and the sinning of the soul. So that there was no means of prevention; I could not so much as wish, that I might be no sinner, for I could not wish that I might be no child. Neither is there any means of separation now; our concupiscences dwell in us, and prescribe in us, and will gnaw upon us, as worms, till they deliver our bodies to the worms of the grave, and our consciences to the worm that never dies.

From the dangerous effects then of this sickness, David desires to be healed, and by God himself, *Sana me Domine, O Lord heal*

*me;* for that physic that man gives, is all but drugs of the earth; moral and civil counsels, rather to cover than recover, rather to disguise than to avoid: they put a clove in the mouth, but they do not mend the lungs. To cover his nakedness Adam took but *fig-leaves;* but to recover Hezekiah, God took *figs themselves*[24]. Man deals upon leaves, that cover, and shadow, God upon fruitful and effectual means, that cure, and nourish. And then, God took *a lump of figs*[25]; God is liberal of his graces, and gives not over a cure, at one dressing: and they were *dry figs too*, says that story; you must not look for figs from the tree, for immediate revelations, for private inspirations from God; but the medicinal preaching of the word, medicinal sacraments, medicinal absolution, are such dry figs as God hath preserved in his church for all our diseases. St. Paul had a strong desire, and he expressed it in often prayer to God, to have this peccant humour, this malignity clean purged out, to have that *stimulus carnis*, that concupiscence absolutely taken away. God would not do so; but yet he applied his effectual physic, *sufficient grace.*

This then is the soul's *panacea*, the *pharmacum catholicum*, the *medicina omnimorbia*, the physic that cures all, the sufficient grace, the seasonable mercy of God, in the merits of Christ Jesus, and in the love of the Holy Ghost. This is the physic; but then, there are ever *vehicula medicinæ*, certain syrups, and liquors, to convey the physic; water, and wine in the sacraments; and certain physicians to ordain and prescribe, the ministers of the word and sacraments; the Father sends, the Son makes, the Holy Ghost brings, the minister lays on the plaster. For, *Medicinæ ars a Deo data, ut inde rationem animæ curandæ disceremus*[26], God's purpose in giving us the science of bodily health, was not determined in the body: but his large and gracious purpose was, by that restitution of the body, to raise us to the consideration of spiritual health. When Christ had said to him, who was brought sick of the palsy, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*[27], and that the Scribes and Pharisees were scandalized with that, as though he, being but man, had usurped upon the power of God, Christ proves to them, by an actual restoring of his bodily

[24] Isaiah xxxviii. 11. [25] 2 Kings xx. 7. [26] Basil.
[27] Mark ii. 5.

health, that he could restore his soul too, in the forgiveness of sins: he asks them there, *Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. Christus facit sanitatem corporalem argumentum spiritualis*[28]; Christ did not determine his doctrine in the declaration of a miraculous power exercised upon his body, but by that, established their belief of his spiritual power, in doing that, which in their opinion was the greater work. Pursue therefore his method of curing; and if God have restored thee in any sickness, by such means, as he of his goodness hath imprinted in natural herbs, and simples, think not that that was done only or simply for thy body's sake, but that, as it is as easy for God to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, as Take up thy bed and walk, so it is as easy for thee, to have spiritual physic, as bodily; because, as God hath planted all those medicinal simples in the open fields, for all, though some do tread them under their feet, so hath God deposited and prepared spiritual helps for all, though all do not make benefit of those helps which are offered. It is true, that God says of his church, *Hortus conclusus soror mea, My sister, my spouse is a garden enclosed, as a spring shut in, and a fountain sealed up*[29]; but therein is our advantage, who, by being enwrapped in the covenant, as the seed of the faithful, as the children of Christian parents, are born if not within this walled garden, yet with a key in our hand to open the door, that is, with a right and title, to the sacrament of baptism. The church is a garden walled in, for their better defence and security that are in it; but not walled in to keep any out, who, either by being born within the covenant, inherit a right to it, or by accepting the grace which is offered them, acquire, and profess a desire to enter thereinto. For, as it is a garden, full of *spikenard*, and of *incense*, and of *all spices*, (as the text says there) so that they who are in this garden, in the church, are in possession of all these blessed means of spiritual health; so are these spices, and incense, and spikenard, of a diffusive and spreading nature, and breathe even over the walls of the garden: *Oleum effusum nomen ejus*[30]; The name of Christ is unction, ointment; but it

[28] Bernard. [29] Cant. iv. 12. [30] Cant. i. 3.

is an ointment poured out, an ointment that communicates the fragrancy thereof, to persons at a good distance; and, as it is said there[31], Christ calls up the *North* and the *South* to *blow upon his garden*, he raises up men to transport and propagate these means of salvation to all nations, so that, in every nation, they that fear him are acceptable to him; not that that fear of God in general, as one universal power, is sufficient in itself, to bring any man to God immediately, but that God directs the spikenard, and incense of this garden upon that man, and seconds his former fear of God, with a love of God, and brings him to a knowledge, and to a desire, and to a possession, and fruition of our more assured means of salvation. When he does so, this is his method, as in restoring bodily health, he said, *Surge, tolle, ambula*, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk: so to every sick soul, whose cure he undertakes, he says so too, *Surge, tolle, ambula*. Our beds are our natural affections; these he does not bid us cast away, nor burn, nor destroy: since Christ vouchsafed *induere hominem*, we must not *exuere hominem;* since Christ invested the nature of man, and became man, we must not pretend to divest it, and become angels, or flatter ourselves in the merit of mortifications, not enjoined, or of a retiredness, and departing out of the world, in the world, by the withdrawing of ourselves from the offices of mutual society, or an extinguishing of natural affections. But, *Surge*, says our Saviour, Arise from this bed, sleep not lazily in an over-indulgency to these affections; but, *ambula*, walk sincerely in thy calling, and thou shalt hear thy Saviour say, *Non est infirmitas hæc ad mortem*, These affections, nay, these concupiscencies shall not destroy thee.

David then doth not pray for such an exact and exquisite state of health, as that he should have no infirmity; physicians for our bodies tell us, that there is no such state; the best degree of health is but *neutralitas;* he is well (that is, as well as man can be) that is not dangerously sick; for absolutely well can no man be. Spiritual physicians will tell you so too; he that says you have no sin, or that God sees not your sin, if you be of the elect, deceives you. It is not for an innocency that David prays; but it is against deadly diseases, and against violent accidents of

[31] Cant. iv. 16.

those diseases. He doth not beg, he cannot hope for an absolute peace: nature hath put a war upon us; true happiness, and apparent happiness fight against one another: sin hath put a war upon us; the flesh and the spirit fight one against another: Christ Jesus himself came to put a war upon us; the zeal of his glory, and the course of this world, fight one against another. It is not against all war; nay, it is not against all victory that David prays, he cannot hope that he should be overcome by no temptations; but against such a war, and such a victory, as should bring him to servility, and bondage to sin, that sin entering by conquest upon him, should govern as a tyrant over him, against such a sickness as should induce a consumption, it is that he directs this prayer, *Sana me Domine*, Not, Lord make me impeccable, but Lord make me penitent, and then heal me. And he comes not to take physic upon wantonness; but because the disease is violent, because the accidents are vehement; so vehement, so violent, as that it hath pierced *Ad ossa*, and *ad animam*, *My bones are vexed, and my soul is sore troubled*, therefore *heal me;* which is the reason upon which he grounds this second petition, *Heal me, because my bones are vexed*, &c.

We must necessarily insist a little upon these terms, *the bones*, *the soul*, *the trouble*, or *vexation*. First, *ossa*, *bones*, we know in the natural and ordinary acceptation, what they are; they are these beams, and timbers, and rafters of these tabernacles, these temples of the Holy Ghost, these bodies of ours. But *Immanebimus nativæ significationi?* says St. Basil, Shall we dwell upon the native and natural signification of these *bones? Et intelligentia passim obvia contenti erimus?* Shall we who have our conversation in heaven, find no more in these bones, than an earthly, a worldly, a natural man would do? By St. Basil's example, we may boldly proceed farther: *Membra etiam animæ sunt*, says he: The soul hath her limbs as well as the body. *Surdi audite, cæci aspicite*, says God in Isaiah[28]; if their souls had not ears and eyes, the blind could not see, the deaf could not hear, and yet God calls upon the deaf and blind, to hear and see. As St. Paul says to the Ephesians, *The eyes of your understanding being en-*

[28] Isaiah xlii.

*lightened;* so David says, *Dentes peccatorum contrivisti, Thou hast broken the teeth*[38]; that is, the pride and the power, the venom and malignity of the wicked: *Membra etiam animæ sunt,* The soul hath her bones too; and here David's *bones* were the strongest powers and faculties of his soul, and the best actions and operations of those faculties, and yet they were shaken. For this hereditary sickness, original sin, prevails so far upon us, that upon our good days we have some grudgings of that fever; even in our best actions, we have some of the leaven of that sin. So that if we go about to comfort ourselves, with some dispositions to God's glory, which we find in ourselves, with some sparks of love to his precepts, and his commandments, with some good strength of faith, with some measure of good works, yea, with having something for the name, and glory of Christ Jesus: yet if we consider what human and corrupt affections have been mingled in all these, *conturbabuntur ossa,* our bones will be troubled, even those that appeared to be strong works, and likely to hold out, will need a reparation, an exclamation, *Sana me Domine,* O Lord heal these too, or else these are as weak as the worst: *Ossa non dolent;* the bones themselves have no sense, they feel no pain. We need not say, That those good works themselves, which we do, have in their nature, the nature of sin; that every good work considered alone, and in the substance of the act itself is sin; but *membranæ dolent;* those little membranes, those films, those thin skins, that cover, and that line some bones, are very sensible of pain, and of any vexation. Though in the nature of the work itself, the work be not sin, yet in those circumstances that invest, and involve the work, in those things which we mingle with the work, whether desire of glory towards men, or opinion of merit towards God; whensoever those bones, those best actions come to the examination of a tender and a diligent conscience, *si ossa non dolent, membrana dolent,* if the work be not sinful, the circumstances are, and howsoever they may be conceived to be strong, as they are *ossa,* bones, works, in a moral consideration, good, yet, as they are *Ossa mea,* says David, As they are *my bones,* such good works

[38] Psal. iii. 7.

as taste of my ill corruptions, so long they are vexed, and troubled, and cannot stand upright, nor appear with any confidence in the sight of God.

Thus far then first David needed this sanation, this health that he prays for, that his best actions were corrupt; but the corruption went farther, to the very root and fountain of those actions, *Ad ipsam animam*, his very *soul* was *sore vexed*. It is true, that as this word *anima*, *the soul*, is sometimes taken in the Scriptures, this may seem to go no farther than the former, no more that his soul was vexed, than that his bones were so: for, *anima*, in many places, is but *animalis homo*, the soul signifies but the natural man: and so *opponitur spiritui*, the *soul* is not only said to be a diverse thing, but a contrary thing to the *spirit*. When the apostle says to the Thessalonians, *Now the very God of peace sanctify you throughout, that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*[34]. And where the same apostle says to the Hebrews, *The word of God divideth asunder the soul and the spirit*[35]; here is a difference put between corrupt nature, and the working of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost in man; for here, the *soul* is taken for *Animalis homo*, The natural man, and the *spirit* is taken for the Spirit of God. But besides this, these two words, *soul* and *spirit*, are sometimes used by the fathers, in a sense diverse from one another, and as different things, and yet still as parts of one and the same man; man is said by them, not only to have a body, and a soul, but to have a soul, and a spirit; not as spirit is the Spirit of God, and so an extrinsical thing, but as spirit is a constitutive part of the natural man. So, in particular, amongst many, Gregory Nyssen takes the body to be spoken *De nutribili*, The flesh and blood of man, and the soul *De sensibili*, The operation of the senses, and the spirit *De intellectuali*, The intellectual, the reasonable faculties of man; that in the body, man is conformed to plants that have no sense, in the soul, to beasts, that have no reason, in the spirit, to angels. But so, the spirit is but the same thing with that, which now we do ordinarily account the soul to be; for we make account, that the image of God is imprinted in the soul, and that gives him his conformity to

[34] 1 Thess. v. 23. [35] Heb. iv. 12.

angels: but divers others of the ancients have taken *soul* and *spirit*, for different things, even in the intellectual part of man, somewhat obscurely, I confess, and, as some venture to say, unnecessarily, if not dangerously. It troubled St. Hierome sometimes, how to understand the word *spirit* in man: but he takes the easiest way, he despatches himself of it, as fast as he could, that is, to speak of it only as it was used in the Scriptures: *Famosa quæstio*, says he, *sed brevi sermone tractanda*[36]; It is a question often disputed, but may be shortly determined, *Idem spiritus hic, ac in iis verbis, Nolite extinguere spiritum;* When we hear of the spirit in a man, in Scriptures, we must understand it of the gifts of the spirit; for so, fully to the same purpose, says St. Chrysostom, *Spiritus est charisma spiritus*, The spirit is the working of the spirit, the gifts of the spirit: and so when we hear, *the spirit was vexed, the spirit was quenched*, still it is to be understood, the gifts of the spirit. And so, as they restrain the signification of *spirit*, to those gifts only, (though the word do indeed, in many places, require a larger extension) so do many restrain this word in our text, *the soul*, only *ad sensum*, to the sensitive faculties of the soul, that is, only to the pain and anguish that his body suffered; but so far, at least, David had gone, in that which he said before, *My bones are vexed.*

Now, *Ingravescit morbus*, The disease festers beyond the bone, even into the marrow itself. His bones were those best actions that he had produced, and he saw in that contemplation, that for all that he had done, he was still, at best, but an unprofitable servant, if not a rebellious enemy; but then, when he considers his whole soul, and all that ever it can do, he sees all the rest will be no better; the poison, he sees, is in the fountain, the canker in the root, the rancour, the venom in the soul itself. *Corpus instrumentum, anima ars ipsa*, says St. Basil: The body, and the senses are but the tools, and instruments, that the soul works with. But the soul is the art, the science that directs those instruments; the faculties of the soul are the boughs that produce the fruits; and the operations, and particular acts of those faculties are the fruits, but the soul is the root of all. And David

[36] Ad Hedibiam. q. xii., epist. 150.

sees, that this art, this science, this soul can direct him, or establish him in no good way; that not only the fruits, his particular acts, nor only the boughs, and arms, his several faculties, but the root itself, the soul itself, was infected. His bones are shaken, he dares not stand upon the good he hath done, his soul is so too, he cannot hope for any good he shall do: he hath no merit for the past, he hath no freewill for the future; that is his case.

This *troubles* his *bones*, this *troubles* his *soul*, this *vexes* them both; for, the word is all one, in both places, as our last translators have observed, and rendered it aright; not *vexed* in one place, and *troubled* in the other, as our former translators had it; but in both places it is *Bahal*, and *Bahal* imports a vehemence, both in the intenseness of it, and in the suddenness, and inevitableness of it: and therefore it signifies often, *Præcipitantiam*, A headlong downfal and irrecoverableness; and often, *Evanescentiam*, An utter vanishing away, and annihilation. David, (whom we always consider in the Psalms, not only to speak literally of those miseries which were actually upon himself, but prophetically too, of such measures, and exaltations of those miseries, as would certainly fall upon them, as did not seek their sanation, their recovery from the God of all health) looking into all his actions, (they are the fruits) and into all his faculties, (they are the boughs) and into the root of all, the soul itself, considering what he had done, what he could do, he sees that as yet he had done no good, he sees he should never be able to do any; *his bones are troubled*, he hath no comfort in that which is grown up, and past, and *his soul is sore troubled*, (for to the trouble of the soul, there is added in the text, that particle, *valde*, it is a sore trouble that falls upon the soul, *A troubled spirit who can bear?*) because he hath no hope in the future; he was no surer for that which was to come, than for that which was past; but he, (that is, all, considered in that case which he proposes) he comes (as the word signifies) *ad præcipitantiam*, that all his strength can scarce keep him from precipitation into despair, and he comes (as the word signifies too) *ad evanescentiam*, to an evaporating, and a vanishing of his soul, that is, even to a renouncing, and a detestation of his immortality, and to a willingness, to a desire, that he might die the death of other creatures, which perish altogether, and go

out as a candle. This is the trouble, the sore trouble of his soul, who is brought to an apprehension of God's indignation for not performing conditions required at his hands, and of his inability to perform them, and is not come to the contemplation of his mercy, in supply thereof.

There is *Turbatio timoris*, A trouble out of fear of danger in this world, Herod's trouble; *When the magi brought word of another king, Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him*[37]. There is *Turbatio confusionis*, The mariner's trouble in a tempest; *Their soul melteth for trouble*[38], says David. There is *Turbatio occupationis;* Martha's trouble; *Martha thou art troubled about many things*[39], says Christ. There is, *Turbatio admirationis*, The blessed Virgin's trouble, *When she saw the angel, she was troubled at his saying*[40]. To contract this, there is *Turbatio compassionis*, Christ's own trouble, *When he saw Mary weep for her brother Lazarus, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled in himself*[41]. But in all these troubles, Herod's fear, the mariner's irresolution, Martha's multiplicity of business, the blessed Virgin's sudden amazement, our Saviour's compassionate sorrow, as they are in us, worldly troubles, so the world administers some means to extenuate, and alleviate these troubles; for fears are overcome, and storms are appeased, and businesses are ended, and wonders are understood, and sorrows wear out, but in this trouble of the bones, and the soul, in so deep and sensible impressions of the anger of God, looking at once upon the pravity, the obliquity, the malignity of all that I have done, of all that I shall do, man hath but one step between that state, and despair, to stop upon, to turn to the author of all temporal, and all spiritual health, the Lord of life, with David's prayer, *Cor mundum crea, Create a clean heart within me*[42]; begin with me again, as thou begunnest with Adam, in innocency; and see, if I shall husband and govern that innocency better than Adam did; for, for this heart which I have from him, I have it in corruption; and, *who can bring a clean thing out of uncleanness*[43]? Therefore David's prayer goes farther in the same place, *Renew a constant spirit in me;* present cleanness cannot be had from myself; but if I have that from

[37] Matt. ii. 3. [38] Psalm cvii. 27. [39] Luke x. 41. [40] Luke i. 29.
[41] John xi. 33. [42] Psalm li. 10. [43] Job xiv. 4.

God, *mine own clothes will make me foul again*, and therefore do not only create a clean spirit, but renew a spirit of constancy and perseverance. Therefore I have also another prayer in the same Psalm, *Spiritu principali confirma me*[44], Sustain me, uphold me with thy free spirit, thy large, thy munificent spirit: for thy ordinary graces will not defray me, nor carry me through this valley of temptations; not thy single money, but thy talents; not as thou art thine own almoner, but thine own treasurer; it is not the dew, but thy former and latter rain that must water, though it be thy hand that hath planted; not any of the rivers, though of Paradise, but the ocean itself, that must bring me to thy Jerusalem. Create a clean heart; thou didst so in Adam, and in him I defiled it. Renew that heart; thou didst so in baptism; and thy upholding me with thy constant spirit, is thy affording me means, which are constant, in thy church; but thy confirming me with thy principal spirit, is thy making of those means, instituted in thy church, effectual upon me, by the spirit of application, the spirit of appropriation, by which the merits of the Son, deposited in the church, are delivered over unto me.

This then is the force of David's reason in this petition, *Ossa implentur vitiis*, as one of Job's friends speaks, *My bones are full of the sins of my youth*[45], that is, my best actions, now in mine age, have some taste, some tincture from the habit, or some sinful memory of the acts of sin in my youth; *Adhæret os meum carni*, as David also speaks, *My bones cleave to my flesh*[46], my best actions taste of my worst; and *My skin cleaves to my bones*, as Jeremy laments[47], that is, my best actions call for a skin, for something to cover them: and therefore, not therefore because I have brought myself into this state, but because by thy grace I have power to bring this my state into thy sight, by this humble confession, *Sana me Domine, O Lord heal me;* thou that art my Messiah, be my Moses, and carry these bones of thy Joseph out of Egypt[48]; deliver me, in this consideration of mine actions, from the terror of a self-accusing, and a jealous, and suspicious conscience; *Bury my bones beside the bones of the man of God*[49]; beside the bones of the Son of God: look upon my bones as they

[44] Psalm li. 12. [45] Job xx. 11. [46] Psalm cii. 5.
[47] Lam. iv. 8. [48] Exod. xiii. 19. [49] 1 Kings xiii. 31.

are coffined, and shrouded in that sheet, the righteousness of Christ Jesus. *Accedant ossa ad ossa*, as in Ezekiel's vision[50], Let our bones come together, bone to bone, mine to his, and look upon them *uno intuitu*, all together, and there shall come sinews, and flesh, and skin upon them, and breathe upon them, and in him, in Christ Jesus, I shall live; my bones being laid by his, though but gristles in themselves, my actions being considered in his, though imperfect in themselves, shall bear me up in the sight of God. And this may be the purpose of this prayer, this sanation, grounded upon this reason, *O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed*, &c. But yet David must, and doth stop upon this step, he stays God's leisure, and is put to his *Usquequo? But thou, O Lord, how long?*

David had cried *miserere*, he had begged of God to look towards him, and consider him; he had revealed to him his weak and troublesome estate, and he had intreated relief; but yet God gave not that relief presently, nor seemed to have heard his prayer, nor to have accepted his reasons. David comes to some degrees of expostulation with God; but he dares not proceed far; it is but *usquequo Domine?* Which if we consider it in the original, and so also in our last translation, requires a serious consideration. For it is not there as it is in the first translation, *How long wilt thou delay?* David charges God with no delay: but it is only, *Et tu Domine, usquequo? But thou, O Lord, how long?* And there he ends in a holy abruptness, as though he had taken himself in a fault, to enterprise any expostulation with God. He doth not say, How long ere thou hear me? If thou hear me, how long ere thou regard me? If thou regard me, how long ere thou heal me? How long shall my bones, how long shall my soul be troubled? He says not so; but leaving all to his leisure, he corrects his passion, he breaks off his expostulation. As long as I have that commission from God, *Dic animæ tuæ, salus tua sum*[51], Say unto thy soul, I am thy salvation, my soul shall keep silence unto God, of whom cometh my salvation: silence from murmuring, how long soever he be in recovering me: not silence from prayer, that he would come; for that is our last consideration; David proposed his desire, *Miserere*, and *Sana*,

[50] Ezek. xxxvii. 7. [51] Psalm xxxv. 3.

look towards me, and heal me, that was our first; and then his reasons, *Ossa, anima, My bones, my soul is troubled*, that was our second; and then he grew sensible of God's absence, for all that, which was our third proposition; for yet, for all this, he continues patient, and solicits the same God in the same name, the Lord, *But thou O Lord, how long?*

Need we then any other example of such a patience than God himself, who stays so long in expectation of our conversion? But we have David's example too, who having first made his deprecation, that God would not reprove him in anger, having prayed God to forbear him, he is also well content to forbear God, for those other things which he asks, till it be his pleasure to give them. But yet he neither gives over praying, nor doth he incline to pray to any body else, but still *Domine miserere, Have mercy upon me O Lord*, and *Domine sana, O Lord heal me:* industry in a lawful calling, favour of great persons, a thankful acknowledgment of the ministry and protection of angels, and of the prayers of the saints in heaven for us, all these concur to our assistance; but the root of all, all temporal, all spiritual blessings, is he, to whom David leads us here, *Dominus, The Lord;* Lord, as he is proprietary of all creatures; he made all, and therefore is Lord of all; as he is Jehovah, which is the name of essence, of being, as all things have all their being from him, their very being, and their well-being, their creation, and their conservation; and in that name of recognition and acknowledgment, that all that can be had, is to be asked of him, and him only, him, as he is Jehovah, *The Lord*, does David solicit him here; for, *as there is no other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ*[52]; so is there no other name above in heaven proposed to men, whereby they should receive these blessings, but the name of Jehovah; for Jehovah is the name of the whole Trinity, and there are no more, no queen-mother in heaven, no councillors in heaven in commission with the Trinity.

In this name therefore David pursues his prayer: for, from a river, from a cistern, a man may take more water at once, than he can from the first spring and fountain-head; but he cannot

[52] Acts iv. 12.

take the water so sincerely, so purely, so intemerately from the channel as from the fountain-head. Princes and great persons may raise their dependents faster than God does his; but sudden riches come like a land-water, and bring much foulness with them. We are God's vineyard; *The vineyard of the Lord of hosts, is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant plant*[53], says the prophet. And God delights to see his plants prosper, and grow up seasonably. More than once Christ makes that profession, *That he goes down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley*[54], *and to see whether the vine flourished, and whether the pomegranate budded; and he goes up early into the vineyard, to see whether the tender grape appeared*[55]. He had a pleasure in the growth and successive increase of his plants, and did not look they should come hastily to their height and maturity. If worldly blessings, by a good industry, grow up in us, it is natural; but if they fall upon us, *pluit laqueos*, God rains down springes and snares[56], occasions of sin in those abundances, and *pluit grandinem*, he will rain down hailstones[57]; hailstones as big as talents, as in the Revelation[58]; as big as millstones; he will make our riches occasions of raising enemies, and make those enemies grindstones to grind our fortunes to powder. Make not too much haste to be rich: even in spiritual riches, in spiritual health make not too much haste. Pray for it; for there is no other way to get it. Pray to the Lord for it: for saints and angels have but enough for themselves. Make haste to begin to have these spiritual graces; to desire them, is to begin to have them: but make not too much haste in the way; do not think thyself purer than thou art, because thou seest another do some such sins, as thou hast forborne.

Beloved, at last, when Christ Jesus comes with his scales, thou shalt not be weighed with that man, but every man shall be weighed with God: *Be pure as your Father in heaven is pure*, is the weight that must try us all; and then, the purest of us all, that trusts to his own purity, must hear that fearful *Mene Tekel Upharsin*, Thou art weighed, thou art found too light, thou art divided, separated from the face of God, because thou hast not

[53] Isaiah v. 7. [54] Cant. vi. 10. [55] Cant. vii. 12.
[56] Psalm xi. 6. [57] Exod. ix. 23. [58] Rev. xvi. 21.

taken the purity of that Son upon thee, who not only in himself, but those also who are in him, in him are pure, as his, and their Father in heaven is pure. Neither make so much haste to these spiritual riches, and health, as to think thyself whole before thou art: neither murmur, nor despair of thy recovery, if thou beest not whole so soon as thou desiredst. If thou wrestle with temptations, and canst not overcome them, if thou purpose to pray earnestly, and find thy mind presently strayed from that purpose, if thou intend a good course, and meet with stops in the way, if thou seek peace of conscience, and scruples out of zeal interrupt that, yet discomfort not thyself. God stayed six days in his first work, in the creation, before he came to make thee; yet all that while he wrought for thee. Thy regeneration, to make thee a new creature, is a greater work than that, and it cannot be done in an instant. God hath purposed a building in thee; he hath sat down, and considered, that he hath sufficient to accomplish that building, as it is in the Gospel, and therefore leave him to his leisure[59].

When thou hast begun with David, with a *Domine ne arguas*, O Lord rebuke me not, and followed that, with a *Domine sana me*, O Lord heal me, if thou find a *Domine usquequo?* Any degree of weariness of attending the Lord's leisure, arising in thee, suppress it, overcome it, with more and more petitions, and that which God did by way of commandment, in the first creation, do thou by way of prayer, in this thy second creation; first he said, *Fiat lux*, *Let there be light:* pray thou, that he would enlighten thy darkness. God was satisfied with that light for three days, and then he said, *Fiant luminaria*, *Let there be great lights:* bless God for his present light, but yet pray that he will enlarge that light which he hath given thee; and turn all those his commandments into prayers, till thou come to his *Faciamus hominem*, *Let us make man according to our own image;* pray that he will restore his image in thee, and conform thee to him, who is *the image of the invisible God*[60], our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. He did his greatest work upon thee, before time was, thine election; and he hath reserved the consummation of that work, till time shall be no more, thy glorification: and as for thy

[59] Luke xiv. 28. [60] Coloss. i. 15.

vocation he hath taken his own time, he did not call thee into the world in the time of the primitive church, nor perchance, call thee effectually, though in the church, in the days of thy youth; so stay his time for thy sanctification, and if the day-spring from on high have visited thee but this morning, if thou beest come to a *fiat lux* but now, that now God have kindled some light in thee, he may come this day seven-night to a *fiant luminaria*, to multiply this light by a more powerful means. If not so soon, yet still remember, that it was God that made the sun stand still to Joshua, as well as to run his race as a giant to David; and God was as much glorified in the standing still of the sun, as in the motion thereof; and shall be so in thy sanctification, though it seem to stand at a stay for a time, when his time shall be to perfect it, in a measure acceptable to thee. Nothing is acceptable to him, but that which is seasonable; nor seasonable, except it come in the time proper to it: and, as St. Augustine says, *Natura rei est, quam indidit Deus*, That is the nature of everything, which God hath imprinted in it, so that is the time for everything, which God hath appointed for it. *Pray*, and *stay*, are two blessed monosyllables; to ascend to God, to attend God's descent to us, is the motion, and the rest of a Christian; and as all motion is for rest, so let all the motions of our soul in our prayers to God be, that our wills may rest in his, and that all that pleases him, may please us, therefore because it pleases him; for therefore, because it pleases him, it becomes good for us, and then, when it pleases him, it becomes seasonable unto us, and expedient for us.

## SERMON L.

*PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

PSALM vi. 4, 5.

Return, O Lord; Deliver my soul; O Lord save me, for thy mercy's sake.
For in death there is no remembrance of thee; and in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?

THE whole psalm is prayer; and prayer is our whole service to God. Earnest prayer hath the nature of importunity; we press, we importune God in prayer; yet that puts not God to a morosity, to a frowardness; God flings not away from that; God suffers that importunity, and more. Prayer hath the nature of impudency; we threaten God in prayer; as Gregory Nazianzen adventures to express it; he says, his sister, in the vehemence of her prayer, would threaten God, *Et honesta quadam impudentia, egit impudentem;* She came, says he, to a religious impudency with God, and to threaten him, that she would never depart from his altar, till she had her petition granted; and God suffers this impudency, and more. Prayer hath the nature of violence; in the public prayers of the congregation, we besiege God, says Tertullian; and we take God prisoner, and bring God to our conditions; and God is glad to be straitened by us in that siege. This prophet here executes before, what the apostle counsels after, *Pray incessantly;* even in his singing he prays; and as St. Basil says, *Etiam somnia justorum preces sunt,* A good man's dreams are prayers, he prays, and not sleepily, in his sleep, so David's songs are prayers. Now in this his besieging of God, he brings up his works from afar off, closer; he begins in this psalm, at a deprecatory prayer; he asks nothing, but that God would do nothing, that he would forbear him; *Rebuke me not, correct me not.* Now, it costs the king less, to give a pardon, than to give a pension; and less to give a reprieve, than to give a pardon; and less to connive, not to call in question, than either reprieve, pardon or pension; to forbear, is not much. But then, as the mathematician said, that he could make an engine, a screw, that should move the whole frame of the world, if he could

have a place assigned him, to fix that engine, that screw upon, that so it might work upon the world: so prayer, when one petition hath taken hold upon God, works upon God, moves God, prevails with God, entirely for all. David then having got this ground, this footing in God, he brings his works closer; he comes from the deprecatory, to a postulatory prayer; not only that God would do nothing against him, but that he would do something for him. God hath suffered man to see *Arcana imperii*, the secrets of his state, how he governs; he governs by precedent; by precedents of his predecessors, he cannot; he hath none; by precedents of other gods, he cannot; there are none; and yet he proceeds by precedents; by his own precedents; he does as he did before; *habenti dat*, to him that hath received, he gives more, and is willing to be wrought, and prevailed upon, and pressed with his own example. And, as though his doing good, were but to learn how to do good better, still he writes after his own copy; and *Nulla dies sine linea*, He writes something to us, that is, he doth something for us, every day. And then, that which is not often seen, in other masters, his copies are better than the originals; his latter mercies larger than his former: and in this postulatory prayer, larger than the deprecatory, enters our text, *Return O Lord; deliver my soul; O save me*, &c.

David, who everywhere remembers God of his covenant, as he was the *God of Abraham*, remembers also, how Abraham proceeded with God, in the behalf of Sodom; and he remembers, that when Abraham had gained upon God, and brought him from a greater, to a less number of righteous men, for whose sakes God would have spared that city, yet Abraham gave over asking, before God gave over granting; and so Sodom was lost. A little more of St. Augustine's importunity, of Nazianzen's impudence, of Tertullian's violence in prayer, would have done well in Abraham; if Abraham had come to a less price, to less than ten, God knows what God would have done; for *God went not away*, says the text there, *till he had left communing with Abraham;* that is, till Abraham had no more to say to him. In memory and contemplation of that, David gives not over in this text, till he come to the uttermost of all, as far as man can ask, as far as

God can give; he begins at first, with a *Revertere Domine*, *Return O Lord*, and higher than that, no man can begin; no man can begin at a *Veni Domine;* no man can pray to God, to come, till God be come into him; *Quid peto, ut venias in me*, says St. Augustine: *Qui non essem, sinonesses in me?* How should I pray, that God would come into me, who not only could not have the spirit of praying, but not the spirit of being, not life itself, if God were not in me already? But then, this prayer is, that when God had been with him, and for his sins, or his coldness, and slackness in prayer, was departed aside from him, yet he would vouchsafe to return to him again, and restore to him that light of his countenance which he had before, *Revertere Domine, O Lord return.* And then he passes to his second petition, *Eripe animam, Deliver my soul;* That when God in his return saw those many and strong snares which entangled him, those many and deep tentations and tribulations which surrounded him, God, being in his mercy thus returned, and in his providence seeing this danger, would not now stand neutral between them, and see him and these tentations fight it out, but fight on his side and deliver him; *Eripe animam, Deliver my soul.* And then, by these two petitions, he makes way for the third and last, which is the perfection and consummation of all, as far as he can carry a prayer or a desire, *Salvum me fac, O Lord save me;* that is, Imprint in me a strong hope of salvation in this life, and invest me in an irremovable posssession, in the life to come. Lord I acknowledge that thou hast visited me heretofore, and for my sins hast absented thyself, *O Lord return;* Lord, now thou art returned, and seest me unable to stand in these tentations and tribulations, *Deliver thou my soul;* Lord thou hast delivered me again and again, and again and again I fall back to my former danger, and therefore, *O Lord save me*, place me where I may be safe; safe in a constant hope, that the Saviour of the world intended that salvation to me; and these three petitions constitute our first part in David's postulatory prayer.

And then the second part, which is also within the words of this text, and consists of those reasons, by which David inclines God to grant his three petitions, which are two, first, *Propter misericordiam tuam*, Do this O Lord, *for thine own mercy sake*, and

then, *Quia non in morte*, Do it O Lord, for thine own honour's sake, *because in death there is no remembrance of thee*, that second part will be the subject of another exercise, for, that which belongs to the three petitions, will employ the time allowed for this.

First then, the first step in this prayer, *Revertere, O Lord return*, implies first a former presence, and then a present absence, and also a confidence for the future; whosoever says, *O Lord return*, says all this, Lord thou wast here, Lord thou art departed hence, but yet, Lord thou mayest return hither again. God was with us all, before we were anything at all; and ever since our making, hath been with us, in his general providence; and so, we cannot say, *O Lord return*, because so he was never gone from us. But as God made the earth, and the fruits thereof, before he made the sun, whose force was to work upon that earth, and upon the natural fruits of that earth, but before he made paradise, which was to have the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge, he made the sun to do those offices, of shining upon it, and returning daily to it; so God makes this earth of ours, that is ourselves, by natural ways, and sustains us by general providence, before any sun of particular grace be seen to shine upon us. But before man can be a paradise, possessed of the tree of life, and of knowledge, this sun is made and produced, the particular graces of God rise to him, and work upon him, and awaken, and solicit, and exalt those natural faculties which were in him; this Son fills him, and fits him, compasses him, and disposes him, and does all the offices of the sun, seasonably, opportunely, maturely, for the nourishing of his soul, according to the several necessities thereof. And this is God's returning to us, in a general apprehension; after he hath made us, and blessed us in our nature, and by his natural means, he returns to make us again, to make us better, first by his first preventing grace, and then by a succession of his particular graces. And therefore we must return to this returning, in some more particular considerations.

There are besides others, three significations in the Scripture, of this word *shubah*, which is here translated, to *return*, appliable to our present purpose. The first is the natural and native, the primary and radical signification of the word. And so, *shubah*,

*to return*, is *redire ad locum suum*, to return to that place, to which a thing is naturally affected; so heavy things return to the centre, and light things return to the expansion; So *man's breath departeth*, says David, *et redit in terram suam, he returns into his earth*[1]; that earth, which is so much his, as that it is he himself; of earth he was, and therefore to earth he returns. But can God return in such a sense as this? Can we find an *ubi* for God? A place that is his place? Yes; and an earth which is his earth; *surely the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant plant*[2]. So the church, which is his vineyard, is his *ubi*, his place, his centre, to which he is naturally affected. And when he calls us hither, and meets us here, upon his Sabbaths, and sheds the promises of his gospel upon the congregation in his ordinance, he returns to us here, as in his *ubi*, as in his own place. And as he hath a place of his own here, so he hath an earth of his own in this place. Our flesh is earth, and God hath invested our flesh, and in that flesh of ours, which suffered death for us, he returns to us in this place, as often as he maketh us partakers of his flesh, and his blood, in the blessed Sacrament. So then, though in my days of sin, God have absented himself from me, (for God is absent when I do not discern his presence) yet if to-day I can hear his voice, as God is returned to-day to this place, as to his *ubi*, as to his own place; so in his entering into me, in his flesh and blood, he returns to me as to his earth, that earth which he hath made his by assuming my nature, I am become his *ubi*, his place; *Deliciæ ejus, His delight is to be with the sons of men*, and so with me; and so in the church, in the sermon, in the sacrament he returns to us, in the first signification of this word *shubah*, as to that place to which he is naturally affected and disposed.

In a second signification, this word is referred, not to the place of God, not to the person of God, but (if we may so speak) to the passion of God, to the anger of God; and so, the returning of God, that is, of God's anger, is the allaying, the becalming, the departing of his anger; and so when God returns, God stays; his anger is returned from us, but God is still with us. *The wrath of the Lord was kindled*, says the prophet Esay; and *he*

[1] Psal. cxlvi. 4. [2] Isaiah v. 7.

*smote his people, so that the mountains trembled, and their carcases were torn in the midst of the streets*[3]. Here is the tempest, here is the visitation, here is God's coming to them; he comes, but in anger, and we hear of no return; nay, we hear the contrary, *Et non redibat furor*, for all this, his wrath, his fury did not return; that is, did not depart from them; for, as God never comes in this manner, till our multiplied sins call him, and importune him, so God never returns in this sense, in withdrawing his anger and judgments from us, till both our words and our works, our prayers and our amendment of life, join in a *Revertere Domine, O Lord return*, withdraw this judgment from us, for it hath effected thy purpose upon us. And so the original, which expresses neither signification of the word, for it is neither return to me, nor return from me, but plainly and only return, leaves the sense indifferent; Lord, thou hast withdrawn thyself from me, therefore in mercy return to me, or else, Lord, thy judgments are heavy upon me, and therefore return, withdraw these judgments from me; which shows the ductileness, the appliableness of God's mercy, that yields almost to any form of words, any words seem to fit it.

But then, the comfort of God's returning to us, comes nearest us, in the third signification of this word *shubah;* not so much in God's returning to us, nor in his anger returning from us, as in our returning to him, *Turn us again, O Lord*, says David, *et salvi erimus, and we shall be saved*[4]; there goes no more to salvation, but such a turning. So that this returning of the Lord, is an operative, an effectual returning, that turns our hearts, and eyes, and hands, and feet to the ways of God, and produces in us repentance, and obedience. For these be the two legs, which our conversion to God stands upon; for so Moses uses this very word, *Return unto the Lord and hear his voice*[5]; there is no returning, without hearing, nor hearing without believing, nor believing, to be believed, without doing; returning is all these. Therefore where Christ says, *That if those works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, Tyre and Sidon would have repented in sackcloth and ashes*[6]; in the Syriac translation of St. Matthew,

[3] Isaiah v. 25 [4] Psal. lxxx. 3. [5] Deut. xxx. 2.
[6] Matt. ii. 21.

we have this very word *shubah*, they would have *returned in sack-cloth and ashes*. So that the word which David receives from the Holy Ghost in this text, being only *returned*, and no more, applies itself to all three senses, return thyself, that is, bring back thy mercy; return thy wrath, that is, call back thy judgments, or return us to thee, that is, make thy means, and offers of grace, in thine ordinance, powerful, and effectual upon us.

Now when the Lord comes to us, by any way, though he come in corrections, in chastisements, not to turn to him, is an irreverent, and unrespective negligence. If a pursuivant, if a serjeant come to thee from the king, in any court of justice, though he come to put thee in trouble, to call thee to an account, yet thou receivest him, thou entertainest him, thou payest him fees. If any messenger of the Lord come to attach thee, whether sickness in thy body, by thine own disorder, decay in thy estate, by the oppression of others, or terror in thy conscience, by the preaching of his ministers, turn thou to the Lord, in the last sense of the word, and his mercy shall return to thee, and his anger shall return from thee, and thou shalt have fulness of consolation in all the three significations of the word. If a worm be trodden upon, it turns again; we may think, that is done in anger, and to revenge; but we know not; the worm hath no sting, and it may seem as well to embrace, and lick his foot that treads upon him. When God treads upon thee, in any calamity, spiritual or temporal, if thou turn with murmuring, this is the turning of a serpent, to sting God, to blaspheme him; this is a turning upon him, not a turning to him; but if thou turn like a worm, then thou turnest humbly to kiss the rod, to lick and embrace his foot that treads upon thee, that is, to love his ministers, which denounce his judgments upon thy sins, yea, to love them, from whom thou receivest defamation in thy credit, or detriment in thy state.

We see how it was imputed to Asa, when God trod upon him, that is, diseased him in his feet, and exalted his disease into extremity, *Yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians*[1]. He turned a by-way; at least, though a right way, too soon, to the physician before the Lord. This is that, that

[1] 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

exasperated God so vehemently, *because the people turneth not to him that smiteth them; neither do they seek the Lord of hosts*[8]; when the Lord of hosts lies with a heavy army upon them. *Therefore*, say the prophet there, *the Lord will cut off from Israel, head and tail, branch and rush in one day.* God is not so vehement, when they neglected him in their prosperity, as when, though he afflicted them, yet they turned not to him. Measure God by earthly princes; (for we may measure the world by a barleycorn) if the king come to thy house, thou wilt profess to take it for an honour, and thou wilt entertain him; and yet his coming cannot be without removes, and troubles, and charges to thee. So when God comes to thee, in his word, or in his actions, in a sermon, or in a sickness, though his coming dislodge thee, remove thee, put thee to some inconvenience, in leaving thy bed of sin, where thou didst sleep securely before, yet here is the progress of the Holy Ghost, intended to thy soul, that first he comes first to thee, and then if thou turn to him, he returns to thee, and settles himself, and dwells in thee.

This is too lovely a prospect, to depart so soon from; therefore look we by St. Augustine's glass, upon God's coming and returning to man. God hath imprinted his image in our souls; and God comes, says that father, *Ut videat imaginem;* Where I have given my picture, I would see how it is respected: God comes to see in what case his image is in us; if we shut doors, if we draw curtains between him and his image, that is, cover our souls, and disguise and palliate our sins, he goes away, and returns in none of those former sins. But if we lay them open, by our free confessions, he returns again; that so, in how ill case soever he find his image, he may wash it over with our tears, and renew it with his own blood, and, *ut resculpat imaginem*, that he may refresh and re-engrave his image in us again, and put it in a richer and safer tablet. And as the angel which came to Abraham at the promise and conception of Isaac, gave Abraham a further assurance of his return at Isaac's birth, *I will certainly return unto thee, and thy wife shall have a son*[9]; so the Lord, which was with thee in the first conception of any good purpose, returns to thee again, to give thee a quickening of that blessed

[8] Isaiah ix. 13. [9] Gen. xviii. 10.

child of his, and again, and again, to bring it forth, and to bring it up, to accomplish and perfect those good intentions, which his spirit, by over-shadowing thy soul, hath formerly begotten in it. So then, he comes in nature, and he returns in grace; he comes in preventing, and returns in subsequent graces. He comes in thine understanding, and returns in thy will; he comes in rectifying thine actions, and returns in establishing habits; he comes to thee in zeal, and returns in discretion; he comes to thee in fervour, and returns in perseverance; he comes to thee in thy peregrination, all the way, and he returns in thy transmigration, at thy last gasp. So God comes, and so God returns.

Yet I am loath to depart myself, loath to dismiss you from this air of paradise, of God's coming, and returning to us. Therefore we consider again, that as God came long ago, six thousand years ago, in nature, when we were created in Adam, and then in nature returned to us, in the generation of our parents: so our Saviour Christ Jesus came to us long ago, sixteen hundred years ago, in grace, and yet in grace returns to us, as often as he assembles us, in these holy convocations. He came to us then, as the wise men came to him, with treasure, and gifts, and gold, and incense, and myrrh; as having an ambition upon the souls of men, he came with that abundant treasure to purchase us. And as to them who live upon the king's pension, it is some comfort to hear that the exchequer is full, that the king's moneys are come in: so is it to us, to know that there is enough in God's hands, paid by his Son, for the discharge of all our debts; he gave enough for us all at that coming; but it is his returning to us, that applies to us, and derives upon us in particular, the benefit of this general satisfaction. When he returns to us in the dispensation and distribution of his graces, in his word and sacraments; when he calls upon us to come to the receipt; when the greater the sum is, the gladder is he of our coming; that where sin abounds, grace might abound too; when we can pursue this prayer, *Revertere Domine*, Return O Lord in grace, in more and more grace, and when we are in possession of a good measure of that grace, we can pray again, *Revertere Domine*, Return O Lord in glory, come Lord Jesus, come quickly; when

we are so rectified by his ordinances here, that in a sincerity of soul, we are not only contented, but desirous to depart from hence, then have we religiously followed our example, that man according to God's heart, David, in this prayer of his. If Christ have not been thus fully in thine heart, before, this is his coming; entertain him now: if he have been there, and gone again, this is his returning; bless him for that: and meet him, and love him, and embrace him, as often as he offers himself to thy soul, in these his ordinances: wish every day a Sunday, and every meal a sacrament, and every discourse a homily, and he shall shine upon thee in all dark ways, and rectify thee in all rugged ways, and direct thee in all cross ways, and stop thee in all doubtful ways, and return to thee in every corner, and relieve thee in every danger, and arm thee even against himself, by advancing thy work, in which thou besiegest him, that is, this prayer, and enabling thee to prevail upon him, as in this first petition, *Revertere Domine, O Lord return*, so in that which follows next, *Eripe animam, Deliver my soul.*

In this prayer, we may either consider David in that affection which St. Paul had when he desired to be delivered *ab angelo Satanæ*, from the messenger of Satan that buffeted him, that so that *stimulus carnis* which he speaks of, that vexation, and provocation of the flesh, might have been utterly removed from him, whereby he might have past his life in God's service in a religious calm, without any storm, or opposition, or contradiction arising in his flesh: or we may consider it as a prayer agreeable to that petition in our Lord's prayer, *Libera nos à malo, Deliver us from evil;* which is not from being attended by evil, but by being swallowed up by it. *Eripe me*, may be, deliver me from rebellions, or deliver me in rebellions; either that they come not, or that they overcome not.

In that prayer of St. Paul, that God would remove *angelum Satanæ*, and take away *stimulum carnis*, first, St. Paul is not easily understood, and then, it may be, not safely imitated. It is hard to know what St. Paul means in his prayer, and it may be dangerous to pray as he prayed. For the actions of no man, how holy soever, till we come to Christ himself, lay such an obligation upon us, as that we must necessarily do as they did.

Nay, the actions of Christ himself lay not that obligation upon us, to fast as he fasted; no nor to pray as he prayed. A man is not bound in an affliction, or persecution, at least at all times, to that prayer, *Si possible*, or *Transeat calix*, If it be possible let this cup pass; but if God vouchsafe him a holy constancy, to go through with his martyrdom, he may proceed in it without any such deprecation to God, or petition to the judge.

But first, before we consider whether he might be imitated, if we understood him, we find it hard to understand him. St. Augustine's free confession, *Se nescire quid sit angelus Satanæ*, That he never understood what St. Paul meant by that *messenger of Satan*, is more ingenuous than their interpretation, who, I know not upon what tradition, refer it to an extreme pain in the head, that St. Paul should have, as Theophylact says; or refer it *ad morbum iliacum*, which Aquinas speaks of; or to the gout, or pains in the stomach, as Nazianzen, and Basil interpret it. Œcumenius understands this *angel*, this *messenger of Satan*, to be those heretics, which were his adversaries, in his preaching of the gospel; according to that signification of the word *Satan*, in which Solomon uses it to Hiram, *Non est mihi Satan, I have no adversary*[10]. Others, even amongst the fathers, understand it particularly, and literally, of that concupiscence, and those lusts of the flesh, which even the most sanctified men may have some sense of, and some attempts by. Others understand it generally of all calamities, spiritual, and temporal, incident to us in this life. But Cajetan goes furthest, who reads it not as we do, *Angelum Satanæ*, but *Angelum Satanum;* not that angel which comes from Satan, but that angel that is Satan himself. So that he conceives it to be a prayer against all tentations and tribulations here, and hereafter, which the devil or the devil's instruments can frame against us.

Now, if we think we understand it aright, in understanding it so generally, then enters our second doubt, whether we may imitate St. Paul in so general a prayer. We dispute in the school, whether, if it were in his power to do it, man might lawfully destroy any entire species of creatures in the world, though offensive, and venomous, as vipers or scorpions. For

[10] 1 Kings v. 4.

every species being a link of God's great chain, and a limb of his great creature, the whole world, it seems not to be put into our power, to break his chain, and take out a link, to maim his great creature, and cut off a limb, by destroying any entire species, if we could. So neither does it seem conducible to God's purposes in us, (which is the rule of all our prayers) to pray utterly against all tentations, as vehemently as against sins. God should lose by it, and we should lose by it, if we had no tentations; for God is glorified in those victories, which we, by his grace, gain over the devil. *Nescit diabolus, quanta bona de illo fiunt, etiam, cum sævit*[11]; Little knows the devil, how much good he does us, when he tempts us; for by that we are excited to have our present recourse to that God, whom in our former security, we neglected, who gives us the issue with the tentation. *Ego novi quid apposuerim*, I know what infirmities I have submitted thee to, and what I have laid and applied to thee. *Ego novi unde ægrotes, ego novi unde saneris;* I know thy sickness, and I know thy physic. *Sufficit tibi gratia mea;* whatsoever the disease be, my grace shall be sufficient to cure it. For whether we understand that, as St. Chrysostom does, *De gratia miraculorum*, that it is sufficient for any man's assurance, in any tentation, or tribulation, to consider God's miraculous deliverances of other men, in the like cases; or whether we understand it according to the general voice of the interpreters, that is, be content that there remain in thy flesh, matter and subject for me to produce glory from thy weakness, and matter and subject for thee to exercise thy faith and allegiance to me, still these words will carry an argument against the expedience of absolute praying against all tentations; for still, this *gratia mea sufficit*, will import this, amount to this, I have as many antidotes, as the devil hath poisons, I have as much mercy as the devil hath malice; there must be scorpions in the world; but the scorpion shall cure the scorpion; there must be tentations; but tentations shall add to mine, and to thy glory, and, *eripiam*, I will deliver thee.

This word is in the original, *chalatz;* which signifies *eripere* in such a sense, as our language does not fully reach in any one

[11] Augustine.

word. So there is some defectiveness, some slackness in this word of our translation, *delivering*. For it is such a delivering, as is a sudden catching hold, and snatching at the soul of a man, then, when it is at the brink, and edge of a sin. So that if thy facility, and that which thou wilt make shift to call good nature, or good manners, have put thee into the hands of that subtle woman, that Solomon speaks of, *That is come forth to meet thee, and seek thy face*[12]; if thou have followed her, *As an ox goeth to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks*[13]; even then, when the axe is over thy head, then when thou hast approached so near to destruction, then is the season of this prayer, *Eripe me Domine*, Catch hold of me now O Lord, and *deliver my soul.* When Joseph had resisted the temptations of his maaster's wife[14], and resisted them the only safe way, not only not to yield, but as the text says, Not to come in her company, and yet she had found her opportunity when there was none in the house but they, he came to an inward *Eripe me Domine*, O Lord take hold of me now, and she caught, and God caught; she caught his garment, and God his soul; she delivered him, and God delivered him: she to prison, and God from thence. If thy curiosity, or thy confidence in thine own spiritual strength, carry thee into the house of Rimmon, to idolatry, to a mass, trust not thou to Naaman's request, *Ignoscat Dominus servo in hac re*[15], That God will pardon thee, as often as thou dost so; but since thou hast done so now, now come to this *Eripe animam, O Lord deliver my soul* now, from taking harm now, and hereafter, from exposing myself to the like harm. For this is the purpose of David's prayer in this signification of this word, that howsoever infirmity, or company, or curiosity, or confidence, bring us within the distance, and danger, within the sphere, and latitude of a temptation, that though we be not lodged in Sodom, yet we are in the suburbs, though we be not impaled in a sin, yet we are within the purlieus, (which is not safely done; no more than it is in a state, to trust always to a defensive war) yet when we are engaged, and enthralled in such a temptation, then, though God be not delighted with our danger, yet then is God most delighted

[12] Prov. vii. 10. [13] Prov. vii. 15. [14] Gen. xxxix. 10. [15] 2 Kings v.

to help us, when we are in danger; and then, he comes not only to deliver us from that imminent, and particular danger, according to that signification of this word, but according to that interpretation of this word, which the Septuagint hath given it, in the prophet Esay, *Jachalitz, pinguefaciet*[16]; He shall proceed in his work, and *make fat thy soul;* that is, deliver thee now, and preserve, and establish thee after, to the fulfilling of all, that belongs to the last petition of this prayer, *Salvum me fac, O Lord save me;* though we have been absent, he shall *return;* and being *returned,* shall not stand still, nor stand neutral, but *deliver* thee; and having delivered thee, shall not determine his love in that one act of mercy, but shall *save thee,* that is, imprint in thee a holy confidence, that his salvation is thine.

So then, in that manner is God's deliverance expressed, *They shall cry unto him,* (till we cry, he takes no knowledge at all) *and then he sends to them,* (there is his returning upon their cry) and then, *He shall deliver them,* says that prophet[17]; and so, the two former petitions of this prayer are answered; but the consummation, and establishment of all, is in the third, which follows in the same place, *He shall send them a Saviour, and a great one.* But who is that? What Saviour? Doubtless he that is proclaimed by God, in the same prophet, *Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Behold, thy salvation cometh*[18]. For, that word which that prophet uses there, and this word, in which David presents this last petition here, is in both places *Jashang,* and *Jashang* is the very word, from which the name of Jesus is derived; so that David desires here, that salvation which Esay proclaimed there, salvation in the Saviour of the world, Christ Jesus, and an interest in the assurance of his merits.

We find this name of Saviour attributed to other men in the Scriptures, than to Christ. In particular distresses, when God raised up men, to deliver his people sometimes, those men were so called Saviours. And so St. Jerome interprets those word of the prophet, *Ascendent salvatores, Saviours shall come up, on mount Zion*[19], of prophets, and preachers, and such other instruments,

[16] Isaiah lviii. 11. [17] Isaiah xix. 20. [18] Isaiah lxii. 11.
[19] Obad. i. 21.

as God should raise for the salvation of souls. Those, whom in other places, he calls *Angels of the church*, here he calls by that higher name, *Saviours*. But such a Saviour as is proclaimed to the ends of the world, to all the world, a Saviour in the mountains, in the height of presumptuous sins, and a Saviour in the valleys, in the dejection of inordinate melancholy too, A Saviour of the East, of rising, and growing men, and a Saviour of the West, of withering, declining, languishing fortunes too, A Saviour in the state of nature, by having infused the knowledge of himself, into some men then, before the light, and help of the law was afforded to the world, a Saviour in the state of the law, by having made to some men then, even types accomplishments, and prophecies histories, and, as himself *calls things that are not, as though they were*, so he made those men see things that were not, as though they were, (for so Abraham *saw his day and rejoiced*) a Saviour in the state of the Gospel, and so, as that he saves some there, for the fundamental Gospel's sake, that is, for standing fast in the fundamental articles thereof, though they may have been darkened with some ignorances, or may have strayed into some errors, in some circumstantial points, a Saviour of all the world, of all the conditions in the world, of all times through the world, of all places of the world, such a Saviour is no man called, but Christ Jesus only. For when it is said that Pharaoh called Joseph, *Salvatorem mundi*, A Saviour of the world[20], (besides, that if it were so, that which is called all the world, can be referred but to that part of the world which was then under Pharaoh; as when it is said, that Augustus *taxed the world*, that is intended *de orbe Romano*, so much of the world, as was under the Romans) there is a manifest error in that translation, which calls Joseph so, for that name which was given to Joseph there, in that language in which it was given, doth truly signify *revelatorem secretorum*, and no more, a revealer, a discoverer, a decipherer of secret and mysterious things; according to the occasion, upon which that name was then given, which was the deciphering, the interpreting of Pharaoh's dream.

Be this then thus established, that David for our example considers, and refers all salvation, to salvation in Christ. As he

[20] Gen. xli. 45.

does also where he says after, *Notum fecit salutare tuum, The Lord hath made known his salvation*[21], *Quid est salutare tuum?* says St. Basil; What is the Lord's salvation? and he makes a safe answer out of Simeon's mouth, *Mine eyes have seen thy salvation*[22], when he had seen Christ Jesus. This then is he, which is not only *Salvator populi sui*, the Saviour of his people, the Jews, to whom he hath betrothed himself, *in pacto salis*, a covenant of salt, an everlasting covenant: not only *Salvator corporis sui*, the Saviour of his own body, as the apostle calls him; of that body which he hath gathered from the Gentiles in the Christian church; nor only *Salvator mundi*, a Saviour of the world, so, as that which he did, and suffered, was sufficient in itself, and was accepted by the Father, for the salvation of the world; but, as Tertullian, for the most part reads the word, he was *Salutificator;* not only a Saviour, because God made him an instrument of salvation, as though he had no interest in our salvation, till in his flesh he died for us; but he is *salutificator*, so the author of this salvation, as that from all eternity, he was at the making of the decree, as well as in the fulness of time he was at the executing thereof. In the work of our salvation, if we consider the merit, Christ was sole and alone, no Father, no Holy Ghost trod the wine-press with him; and if in the work of our salvation we consider the mercy, there, though Christ were not sole, and alone, (for that mercy in the decree was the joint-act of the whole Trinity) yet even in that, Christ was equal to the Father, and the Holy Ghost. So he is *salutificator*, the very author of this salvation, as that when it came to the act, he, and not they, died for us; and when it was in council, he, as well as they, and as soon as they, decreed it for us.

As therefore the church of God scarce presents any petition, any prayer to God, but it is subscribed by Christ; the name of Christ, is for the most part the end, and the seal of all our collects; all our prayers in the Liturgy, (though they be but for temporal things, for plenty, or peace, or fair-weather) are shut up so, *Grant this O Lord, for our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus' sake:* so David for our example, drives all his petitions in this text, to

[21] Psal. xcviii, 2. [22] Luke ii. 30.

this conclusion, *Salvum me fac, O Lord save me;* that is, apply that salvation, Christ Jesus to me. Now beloved, you may know, that yourselves have a part in those means, which God uses to that purpose, yourselves are instruments, though not causes of your own salvation. *Salvus factus es pro nihilo, non de nihilo tamen*[23]; Thou bringest nothing for thy salvation, yet something to thy salvation; nothing worth it, but yet something with it; thy new creation, by which thou art a new creature, that is, thy regeneration, is wrought as the first creation was wrought. God made heaven and earth of nothing; but he produced the other creatures out of that matter, which he had made. Thou hadst nothing to do in the first work of thy regeneration; thou couldst not so much as wish it; but in all the rest, thou art a fellow-worker with God; because, before that, there are seeds of former grace shed in thee. And therefore when thou comest to this last petition, *Salvum me fac, O Lord save me,* remember still, that thou hast something to do, as well as to say; that so thou mayest have a comfortable answer in thy soul, to the whole prayer, *Return O Lord, deliver my soul, and save me.* And so we have done with our first part, which was the prayer itself; and the second, which is the reasons of the prayer, we must reserve for a second exercise.

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## SERMON LI.

### *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

### Psalm vi. 4, 5.

Return, O Lord; deliver my soul; O Lord save me, for thy mercy's sake.
For in death there is no remembrance of thee; and in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?

We come now to the reasons of these petitions, in David's prayer; for, as every prayer must be made with faith, (I must believe that God will grant my prayer, if it conduce to his glory, and my good to do so, that is the limit of my faith) so I must have reason to

[23] Bernard.

ground a likelihood, and a fair probability that that particular which I pray for, doth conduce to his glory and my good, and that therefore God is likely to grant it. David's first reason here is grounded on God himself, *Propter misericordiam*, Do it *for thy mercy's sake;* and in his second reason, though David himself, and all men with him, seem to have a part, yet at last we shall see, the reason itself to determine wholly and entirely in God too, and in his glory, *Quoniam non in morte*, Do it O Lord, *For in death there is no remembrance of thee*, &c.

In some other places, David comes to God with two reasons, and both grounded merely in God; *Misericordia, et veritas, Let thy mercy and thy truth always preserve me*[1]. In this place he puts himself wholly upon his mercy, for mercy is all, or at least, the foundation that sustains all, or the wall that embraces all. That mercy, which the word of this text, *casad*, imports, is *Benignitas in non promeritum;* Mercy is a good disposition towards him, who hath deserved nothing of himself; for, where there is merit, there is no mercy. Nay, it imports more than so, for mercy, as mercy, presumes not only no merit in man, but it takes knowledge of no promise in God, properly; for that is the difference between mercy and truth, that by mercy at first, God would make promises to man, in general; and then by truth, he would perform those promises: but mercy goeth first; and there David begins and grounds his prayer, at mercy; mercy that can have no pre-mover, no pre-relation, but begins in itself. For if we consider the mercy of God to mankind subsequently, I mean, after the death of Christ, so it cannot be properly called mercy. Mercy thus considered, hath a ground; and God thus considered, hath received a plentiful, and an abundant satisfaction in the merits of Christ Jesus; and that which hath a ground in man, that which hath a satisfaction from man, (Christ was truly man) falls not properly, precisely, rigidly, under the name of mercy. But consider God in his first disposition to man, after his fall, that he would vouchsafe to study our recovery, and that he would turn upon no other way, but the shedding of the blood of his own and innocent, and glorious Son, *Quid est homo, aut filius hominis?*

[1] Psal. xl. 11.

What was man, or all mankind, that God should be mindful of him so, or so merciful to him? When God promises that he will be merciful and gracious to me, if I do his will, when in some measure I do that will of his, God begins not then to be merciful; but his mercy was awake and at work before, when he excited me, by that promise, to do his will. And after, in my performance of those duties, his spirit seals to me a declaration, that his truth is exercised upon me now, as his mercy was before. Still, his truth is in the effect, in the fruit, in the execution, but the decree, and the root is only mercy.

God is pleased also when we come to him with other reasons; when we remember him of his covenant; when we remember him of his holy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; yea when we remember him of our own innocency, in that particular, for which we may be then unjustly pursued; God was glad to hear of a righteousness, and of an innocency, and of clean and pure hands in David, when he was unjustly pursued by Saul. But the root of all is in this, *Propter misericordiam*, Do it for thy mercy's sake. For when we speak of God's covenant, it may be mistaken, who is, and who is not within that covenant; what know I? Of nations, and of churches, which have received the outward profession of Christ, we may be able to say, They are within the covenant, generally taken; but when we come to particular men in the congregation, there I may call a hypocrite, a saint, and think an excommunicate soul, to be within the covenant; I may mistake the covenant, and I may mistake God's servants, who did, and who did not die in his favour, What know I? We see at executions, when men pretend to die cheerfully for the glory of God, half the company will call them traitors, and half martyrs. So if we speak of our own innocency, we may have a pride in that, or some other vicious and defective respect (as uncharitableness towards our malicious persecutors, or laying seditious aspersions upon the justice of the state) that may make us guilty towards God, though we be truly innocent to the world, in that particular. But let me make my recourse to the mercy of God, and there can be no error, no mistaking.

And therefore if that, and nothing but that be my ground,

God will *return* to me, God will *deliver* my soul, God will *save* me, *for his mercy's sake;* that is, because his mercy is engaged in it. And if God were to sell me this *returning*, this *delivering*, this *saving*, and all that I pray for; what could I offer God for that, so great as his own mercy, in which I offer him the innocency, the obedience, the blood of his only Son. If I buy of the king's land, I must pay for it in the king's money; I have no mine, nor mint of mine own; if I would have anything from God, I must give him that which is his own for it, that is, his mercy; and this to give God his mercy, to give God thanks for his mercy, to give to all his mercy, and to acknowledge, that if my works be acceptable to him, nay if my very faith be acceptable to him, it is not because my works, no nor my faith hath any proportion of equivalency in it, or is worth the least flash of joy, or the last spangle of glory in heaven, in itself, but because God in his mercy, only of his mercy, merely for the glory of his mercy, hath past such a covenant, *Crede, et fac hoc*, Believe this, and do this, and thou shalt live, not for thy deed's sake, not nor for thy faith's sake, but for my mercy's sake. And farther we carry not this first reason of the prayer, arising only from God.

There remains in these words another reason, in which David himself, and all men seem to have part, *Quia non in morte, For in death there is no remembrance of thee*, &c., upon occasion of which words, because they seem to imply a loathness in David to die, it may well be inquired, why death seemed so terribly to the good and godly men of those times, as that evermore we see them complain of shortness of life, and of the nearness of death. Certainly the rule is true, in natural, and in civil, and in divine things, as long as we are in this world, *Nolle meliorem, est corruptio primæ habitudinis*[a], That man is not well, who desires not to be better; it is but our corruption here, that makes us loath to hasten to our incorruption there. And besides, many of the ancients, and all the later casuists of the other side, and amongst our own men, Peter Martyr, and Calvin, assign certain cases, in which it hath *rationem boni*, the nature of good, and therefore is to be embraced, to wish our dissolution and departure out of this

[a] Picus. Heptapl. l. 7. procm.

world; and yet, many good and godly men have declared this loathness to die. Beloved, weigh life and death one against another, and the balance will be even; throw the glory of God into either balance, and that turns the scale. St. Paul could not tell which to wish, life, or death; there the balance was even; then comes in the glory of God, the addition of his soul to that choir, that spend all their time, eternity itself, only in glorifying God, and that turns the scale, and then, he comes to his *Cupio dissolvi*, To *desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* But then, he puts in more of the same weight in the other scale, he sees that it advances God's glory more, for him to stay, and labour in the building of God's kingdom here, and so add more souls than his own to that state, than only to enjoy that kingdom in himself, and that turns the scale again, and so he is content *to live.*

These saints of God then when they deprecate death, and complain of the approaches of death, they are, at that time, in a charitable ecstasy, abstracted and withdrawn from the consideration of that particular happiness, which they, in themselves, might have in heaven; and they are transported and swallowed up with this sorrow, that the church here, and God's kingdom upon earth, should lack those means of advancement, or assistance, which God, by their service, was pleased to afford to his church. Whether they were good kings, good priests, or good prophets, the church lost by their death; and therefore they deprecated that death, and desired to live. *The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; but the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day*[8], says Hezekiah; he was affected with an apprehension of a future barrenness after his death, and a want of propagation of God's truth; *I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord*, says he. He had assurance, that he should see the Lord in heaven, when by death he was come thither; but, says he, *I shall not see him in the land of the living;* well, even in the land of the living, even in the land of life itself, he was to see him, if by death he were to see him in heaven; but this is the loss that he laments, this is the misery that he deplores with so much holy passion, *I shall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world;* howsoever, I shall enjoy God myself, yet I shall be no

[8] Isaiah xxxviii. 18.

longer a means, an instrument of the propagation of God's truth amongst others; and, till we come to that joy, which the heart cannot conceive, it is, I think, the greatest joy that the soul of man is capable of in this life, (especially where a man hath been any occasion of sin to others) to assist the salvation of others. And even that consideration, That he shall be able to do God's cause no more good here, may make a good man loath to die. *Quid facies magno nomini tuo*[4]? says Joshua in his prayer to God; if the Canaanites come in, and destroy us, and blaspheme thee, *What wilt thou do unto thy mighty name?* What wilt thou do unto thy glorious church, said the saints of God in those deprecations, if thou take those men out of the world, whom thou hadst chosen, enabled, qualified for the edification, sustentation, propagation of that church. In a word, David considers not here, what men do, or do not in the next world; but he considers only, that in this world he was bound to propagate God's truth, and that that he could not do, if God took him away by death.

Consider then this horror, and detestation, and deprecation of death, in those saints of the Old Testament, with relation to their particular, and then it must be, *quia promissiones obscuræ*, because Moses had conveyed to those men, all God's future blessings, all the joy and glory of heaven, only in the types of earthly things, and said little of the state of the soul after this life. And therefore the promises belonging to the godly after this life, were not so clear then, not so well manifested to them, not so well fixed in them, as that they could, in contemplation of them, step easily, or deliver themselves confidently into the jaws of death; he that is not fully satisfied of the next world, makes shift to be content with this; and he that cannot reach, or does not feel that, will be glad to keep his hold upon this. Consider their horror, and detestation, and deprecation of death, not with relation to themselves, but to God's church, and then it will be, *quia operarii pauci*, because God had a great harvest in hand, and few labourers in it, they were loath to be taken from the work.

And these reasons might, at least, by way of excuse and extenuation, in those times of darkness, prevail somewhat in their behalf; they saw not whither they went, and therefore were

[4] Josh. vii. 9.

loath to go; and they were loath to go, because they saw not how God's church would subsist, when they were gone. But in these times of ours, when Almighty God hath given an abundant remedy to both these, their excuses will not be appliable to us. We have a full clearness of the state of the soul after this life, not only above those of the old law, but above those of the primitive Christian church, which, in some hundreds of years, came not to a clear understanding in that point, whether the soul were immortal by nature, or but by preservation, whether the soul could not die, or only should not die. Or (because that perchance may be without any constant clearness yet) that was not clear to them, (which concerns our case nearer) whether the soul came to a present fruition of the sight of God after death or no. But God having afforded us clearness in that, and then blest our times with an established church, and plenty of able workmen for the present, and plenty of schools, and competency of endowments in universities, for the establishing of our hopes, and assurances for the future, since we have both the promise of heaven after, and the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church here; since we can neither say, *Promissiones obscuræ*, That heaven hangs in a cloud, nor say, *Operarii pauci*, That dangers hang over the church, it is much more inexcusable in us now, than it was in any of them then, to be loath to die, or to be too passionate in that reason of the deprecation, *Quia non in morte, Because in death there is no remembrance of thee*, &c.

Which words, being taken literally, may fill our meditation, and exalt our devotion thus; if in death there be no remembrance of God, if this remembrance perish in death, certainly it decays in the nearness to death; if there be a possession in death, there is an approach in age; and therefore, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*[5]. There are spiritual lethargies, that make a man forget his name; forget that he was a Christian, and what belongs to that duty. God knows what forgetfulness may possess thee upon thy deathbed, and freeze thee there; God knows what rage, what distemper, what madness may scatter thee then; and though in such cases, God reckon with his ser-

[5] Eccles. xii. 1.

vants, according to that disposition which they use to have towards him before, and not according to those declinations from him, which they show in such distempered sicknesses, yet God's mercy towards them can work but so, that he returns to those times, when those men did remember him before. But if God can find no such time, that they never remembered him, then he seals their former negligence with a present lethargy; they neglected God all their lives, and now in death there is no remembrance of him, nor there is no remembrance in him; God shall forget him eternally; and when he thinks he is come to his *consummatum est*, the bell tolls, and will ring out, and there is an end of all in death, by death he comes but to his *secula seculorum*, to the beginning of that misery, which shall never end.

This then which we have spoken, arises out of that sense of these words, which seems the most literal; that is, of a natural death. But as it is well noted by divers expositors upon this Psalm, this whole Psalm is intended of a spiritual agony, and combat of David, wrestling with the apprehension of hell, and of the indignation of God, even in this world, whilst he was alive here. And therefore St. Augustine upon the last words of this verse, in that translation which he followed, *In inferno quis confitebitur tibi?* Not, *In the grave*, but *in hell, who shall confess unto thee?* Puts himself upon this, *In inferno Dives confessus Domino, et oravit pro fratribus*, In hell Dives did confess the name of the Lord, and prayed there for his brethren in the world. And therefore he understands not these words of a literal, and natural, a bodily death, a departing out of this world; but he calls *peccatum mortem*, and then, *cæcitatem animæ infernum;* he makes the easiness of sinning to be death, and then, blindness, and obduration, and remorselessness, and impenitence, to be this hell. And so also doth St. Jerome understand all that passionate deploring of Hezekiah, (which seems literally to be spoken of natural death) of this spiritual death, of the habit of sin, and that he considered, and lamented especially his danger of that death, of a departing from God in this world, rather than of a departing out of this world. And truly many pieces and passages of Hezekiah's lamentation there, will fall naturally enough into that spiritual interpretation; though perchance all will not,

though St. Jerome with a holy purpose drive them, and draw them that way. But whether that of Hezekiah be of natural, or of a spiritual death, we have another author ancienter than St. Augustine, and St. Jerome, and so much esteemed by St. Jerome, as that he translated some of his works, which is Didymus of Alexandria, who says, it is *Impia opinio*, not an inconvenient, or unnatural, but an impious and irreligious opinion, to understand this verse of natural death; because, says he, the dead do much more remember God than the living do. And he makes use of that place, *Deus non confunditur, God is not ashamed to be called the God of the dead, for he hath prepared them a city*[6]. And therefore reading these words of our text, according to that translation which prevailed in the Eastern church, which was the Septuagint, he argues thus, he collects thus, that all that David says here, is only this, *Non est in morte qui memor est Dei*, Not that he that is dead remembers not God, but that he remembers God, is not dead; not in an irreparable, and irrecoverable state of death; not under such a burden of sin as devastates and exterminates the conscience, and evacuates the whole power and work of grace, but that if he can remember God, confess God, though he be fallen under the hand of a spiritual death, by some sin, yet he shall have his resurrection in this life; for, *Non est in morte*, says Didymus, He that remembers God, is not dead, in a perpetual death.

And then this reason of Davids' prayer here, (do this and this, *for in death there is no remembrance of thee*) will have this force, that God would *return* to him in his effectual grace, that God would *deliver* his soul in dangerous temptations, that God would *save* him in applying to him, and imprinting in him a sober, but yet confident assurance that the salvation of Christ Jesus belongs to him; because if God did not *return* to him, but suffer him to wither in a long absence, if God did not *deliver* him, by taking hold of him when he was ready to fall into such sins as his sociableness, his confidence, his inconsideration, his infirmity, his curiosity brought him to the brink of, if God did not *save* him, by a faithful assurance of salvation after a sin committed and resented, this absence, this slipperiness, this preter-

[6] Heb. xi. 16.

mitting, might bring him to such a deadly, and such a hellish state in this world, as that *in death*, that is, in that death, he should have no remembrance of God, *in hell, in the grave*, that is, in that hell, in that grave, he should not confess, nor praise God at all. There was his danger, he should forget God utterly, and God forget him eternally, if God suffered him to proceed so far in sin, that is, *death*, and so far in an obduration and remorselessness, in sin, that is, *hell*, the death and the hell of this world, to which those fathers refer this text.

In this lamentable state, we will only note the force, and the emphasis of this *tui*, and *tibi*, in this verse; no remembrance of *thee*, no praise to *thee;* for this is not spoken of God in general, but of that God, to which David directs the last and principal part of his prayer, which is, *to save him;* it is to God, as God is Jesus, a Saviour; and the wretchedness of this state is, that God shall not be remembered in that notion, as he is Jesus, a Saviour. No man is so swallowed up in the death of sin, nor in the grave of impenitence, no man so dead, and buried in the custom or senselessness of sin, but that he remembers a God, he confesses a God; if an atheist swear the contrary, believe him not; his inward terrors, his midnight startlings remember him of that, and bring him to confessions of that. But here is the depth, and desperateness of this death, and this grave, habitual sin, and impenitence in sin, that he cannot remember, he cannot confess that God which should save him, Christ Jesus his Redeemer; he shall come, he shall not choose but come to remember a God that shall damn him, but not a saving God, a Jesus.

Beloved in the bowels of that Jesus, not only the riches, and honours, and pleasures of this world, and the favour of princes, are, as Job speaks, *Onerosi consolatores, Miserable comforters are they all*, all this world, but even of God himself (be it spoken with piety and reverence, and far from misconstruction) we may say, *Onerosa consolatio*, It is but a miserable comfort which we can have in God himself, it is but a faint remembrance which we retain of God himself, it is but a lame confession which we make to God himself, *Si non tui, si non tibi*, If we remember not *thee*, If we confess not *thee*, our only Lord and Saviour *Christ Jesus*. It is not half our work to be godly men, to confess a God in

general; we must be Christians too; to confess God so, as God hath manifested himself to us. I, to whom God hath manifested himself in the Christian church, am as much an atheist, if I deny Christ, as if I deny God; and I deny Christ, as much, if I deny him in the truth of his worship, in my religion, as if I denied him in his person. And therefore, *Si non tui, Si non tibi*, If I do not remember *thee*, If I do not profess *thee* in thy truth, I am fallen into this *death*, and buried in this *grave* which David deprecates in this text, *For in death there is no remembrance of thee*, &c.

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## SERMON LII.

*PREACHED TO THE KING AT WHITEHALL, UPON THE OCCASION OF THE FAST, APRIL 5, 1628.*

PSALM vi. 6, 7.

I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim, I water my couch with my tears.
Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old, because of all mine enemies.

THIS is David's humiliation; and coming after his repentance and reconciliation, David's penance: and yet here is no fast; it is true; no fast named; David had had experience, that as the wisest actions of kings, (of kings as kings over subjects) so the devoutest actions of kings, (of kings, as humble subjects to the King of kings, the God of heaven) had been misinterpreted. Of sighing, and groaning, and weeping, and languishing, (as in this text) David speaks often, very, very often in the Psalms; and they let him sigh, and groan, and weep, and languish; they neglect his passion, and are not affected with that; but that is all; they afflict him no farther: but when he comes to fasting, they deride him, they reproach him; Cares God whether you eat, or fast? But thrice in all the Psalms does David speak of his

fasting, and in all three places, it was misinterpreted, and reproachfully misinterpreted; *I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine own bosom*[1]; he did this (as he says there) for others, that needed it, and they would not thank him for it, but reproached him. *When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach*[2]. So also *my bones are weak through fasting, and I became a reproach unto them*[3]. And therefore no wonder that David does not so often mention and publish his fasting, as his other mortifications; no wonder that in all his seven penitential Psalms, (which are the church's topics for mortification and humiliation,) there is no mention of his fasting. But for his practice, (though he speak not so much of it in the Psalms) in his history where others, not himself, speak of him, we know that when he mourned, and prayed for his sick child, he fasted too[4]. And we doubt not, but that, when he was thus wearied, (*I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim, I water my couch with my tears; mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies*) he fasted too; he fasted oftener, than he tells us of it. As St. Hierome says, *Jejunium non perfecta virtus, sed cæterarum virtutum fundamentum*, If we must not call fasting (as fasting is but a bodily abstinence) a religious act, an act of God's worship, yet it is a basis, and a foundation, upon which other religious acts, and acts of God's worship are the better advanced. It is so at all times; but it is so especially when it is enjoined by sovereign authority, and upon manifest occasion, as now to us. *Semper virtutis cibus jejunium fuit*, it is elegantly, and usefully said[5]: At all times, Religion feeds upon fasting, and feasts upon fasting, and grows the stronger for fasting. But, *Quod pium est agere non indictum, impium est negligere prædicatum*[6], It is a godly thing to fast uncommanded, but to neglect it being commanded, is an ungodly, an impious, a refractory perverseness, says the same father. But then another carries it to a higher expression, *Desperationis genus est, tunc manducare, cum abstinere debeas*[7], Not to fast when the times require it, and when authority enjoins it,

[1] Psalm xxxv. 13. [2] Psalm lxix. 10. [3] Psalm cix. 24.
[4] 2 Sam. ii. 15. [5] Leo. [6] Leo.
[7] Maximus de jejunio Ninevitarum.

or not to believe, that God will be affected and moved with that fasting, and be the better inclined for it, is *desperationis genus*, a despairing of the state, a despairing of the church, a despairing of the grace of God to both, or of his mercy upon both. And truly there cannot be a more disloyal affection than that, *desperare rempublicam*, to forespeak great councils, to bewitch great actions, to despair of good ends in things well intended: and in our distresses, where can we hope, but in God? And how shall we have access to God, but in humiliation? We doubt not therefore but that this act of humiliation, his fasting, was spread over David's other acts in this text, and that as a sinner in his private person, and as a king in his public and exemplar office, he fasted also, (though he says not so) when he said he was wearied, *I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim, I water my couch with my tears; mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.*

But though this fasting, and these other penal acts of humiliation, be the body that carries, and declares, yet the soul that inanimates, and quickens all, is prayer; and therefore this whole Psalm is a prayer; and the prayer is partly deprecatory, in some things David desires that God would forbear him, as ver. 1., *Correct me not*, for if thou correct me, others will trample upon me; *rebuke me not*, for if thou rebuke me, others will calumniate me; and partly postulatory, that some things God would give him, as *health*, and *deliverance*, and that which is all, *salvation*, in the other verses. Both parts of the prayer are (as all prayer must be) grounded upon reasons; and the reasons are from divers roots; some from the consideration of himself, and they argue his humiliation; some from the contemplation of God, and they testify his devotion, and present recourse to him; some from both together, God, and himself jointly, which is an acknowledgment, that God works not alone in heaven, nor man lives not alone upon earth, but there is a conversation, and a correspondence, and a commerce between God and man, and conditions, and contracts, and covenants, and stipulations between them, and so a mutual interest in one another. From God himself alone, David raises a reason, (ver. 4,) *Propter misericordiam, O save me for thy mercies' sake;* for of the mercy of God, there is no precedent, there

is no concurrent reason, there is no reason of the mercy of God, but the mercy of God: from God, and himself together, he raises a reason, v. 5, *Quia non in morte, For in death there is no remembrance of thee;* destroy me not, for if I die, *Quid facies magno nomini tuo?* (as Joshua speaks) what will become of thy glory? Of that glory which thou shouldst receive from my service in this world, if thou take me out of this world? But then, as he begun in reasons arising from himself, and out of the sense of his own humiliation under the hand of God, (for so he does) v. 2, *Quia infirmus, Have mercy upon me, because I am weak,* and cannot subsist without that mercy. And *Quia turbata ossa,* His *bones* were *vexed; Habet anima ossa sua,* says St. Basil, The soul hath bones as well as the body; the bones of the soul are the strongest faculties, and best operations of the soul, and his best, and strongest actions, were but questionable actions, disputable, and suspicious actions; and *turbata anima,* all his faculties, even in their very root, his very *soul,* was *sore vexed,* v. 3, As, I say, he began with reasons of that kind, arising from himself, so he returns and ends with the same humiliation, in the reasons arising from himself too, *Quia laboravi in gemitu, I am weary with my groaning, all the night make I my bed to swim,* &c.

As our Saviour Christ entered into the house to his disciples, *januis clausis,* when the doors were shut[8]: so God enters into us too, *januis clausis,* when our eyes have not opened their doors, in any real penitent tears, when our mouths have not opened their doors, in any verbal prayers; God sees, and he hears the inclinations of the heart. St. Bernard notes well upon those words of Christ, at the raising of Lazarus, *Father I thank thee, that thou hast heard me*[9], that at that time, when Christ gave thanks to God, for having heard him, he had said nothing to his father; but God had heard his heart. Since God does so even to us, he will much more hear us, as David, when we make outward declarations too, because that outward declaration conduces more to his glory, in the edification of his servants, therefore David comes to that declaratory protestation, *Quia laboravi in gemitu, I am weary with my groaning,* &c.

[8] John xx. 28. [9] John xi. 41.

In which words, we shall consider, *Quid factum*, and *Quid faciendum*, What David did, and what we are to do: for David, after he had thrown himself upon the mercy of God, after he had confessed, and prayed, and done the spiritual parts of repentance, he afflicts his body besides; and so ought we likewise to do, if we will be partakers of David's example. And therefore we may do well to consider *Quid faciendum*, How this example of David binds us, how these groanings and waterings of his bed with tears, and other mortifications assumed after repentance, and reconciliation to God, lay an obligation upon us.

But this is our part, *Quid faciendum*, What is to be done by us; first, *Quid factum*, What David did; and truly he did much first *gemuit*, he came to *groan*, to sigh, to outward declarations of inward heaviness. And *Laboravit in gemitu*, He laboured, he travailed in that passion, and (as the word imports, and as our later translation hath it) he was *wearied*, tired with it; so far, that (as it is in the first translation) he *fainted*, he languished with it. First he sighed, and sighed so; and groaned, and groaned so; passionately, vehemently, and then openly, exemplarily; and he was not ashamed of it, for he came to weeping, though he knew it would be thought childish: and that in that abundance, *Natare feci*, and *Liquefeci lectum*, He *watered* his *bed*, dissolved his bed, made his bed to swim, surrounded his bed with *tears;* and more, he macerated his bed with that brine: and then he continued this affliction; it was not a sudden passion, a flash of remorse; but he continued it, till his *eye* was *consumed* by reason of that *anguish*, and *despite*, and *indignation;* as our diverse translations vary the expressing thereof; so long, as night and day lasted, so long, as that he was waxen old under it; and when this great affliction should have brought him safely into harbour, that he might have rested securely at last, his enemies that triumphed over him, gave him new occasions of misery, his eyes were *consumed*, and *waxed old because of his enemies;* that is, because he was still amongst enemies that triumphed over him.

Be pleased to take another edition, another impression of these particulars; a natural man's moral constancy will hold out against outward declarations of grief; yet David came to that, he

groaned: a groan, a sigh may break out, and the heart be at the more ease for that; but *laboravit*, they grew upon him, and the more he groaned, and the more he sighed, the more he had an inclination, and not only that, but cause to do so, for he found that his sorrow was to be sorrowed for, and his repentance to be repented, there were such imperfections in all. Therefore he suffered thus till he was wearied, till he fainted with groaning, and sighing. And then this wind does not blow over the rain, he weeps; and weeps the more violently, and the more continually, extremes that seldom meet, violence, and lasting, but in his case they did. All this, all night, and all this, all this while, not amongst friends to pity him, and condole with him, but amongst enemies to affront him, and deride him: so that here are all the ingredients, all the elements of misery; sorrow of heart, that admits no disguise, but flows into outward declarations; and such declarations as create no compassion, but triumph in the enemy. *I am weary with my groaning*, &c.

To proceed then to the particulars in our first part, *Quid factum*, What David did, first *gemit*, he comes to sigh, to groan, to an outward declaration of a sense of God's indignation upon him, till he had perfected his repentance. *She sighed, and turned backward*, was Jerusalem's misery. To sigh, and turn backward, to repent, and relapse, is a woful condition: but to sigh, and turn forward, to turn upon God, and to pursue this sorrow for our sins, then, in such sighs, *The spirit of man returns to God that gave it*[10]; as God breathed into man, so man breathes unto the nostrils of God *a savour of rest*, as it is said of Noah, an acceptable sacrifice, when he sighs for his sins. This sighing, this groaning, expressed in this word, *Anach*, *gemitus*, is *Vox turturis*. *Turtur gemit;* it is that voice, that sound which the turtle gives; and we learn by authors of natural story[11], and by experience, *Turturis gemitus indicium veris*, The voice of the turtle is an evidence of the spring; when a sinner comes to this voice, to this sighing, there is a spring of grace begun in him; then *Vox turturis audita in terra nostra*, says Christ to his spouse, *The voice of the turtle is heard in our land*[12]; and so he says to thy soul, this

[10] Eccles. xii. 7. [11] Plin. li. xviii. c. 28. [12] Can. ii. 12.

voice of the turtle, these sighs of thy penitent soul, are heard *in terra nostra*, in our land, in the kingdom of heaven.

And when he hears this voice of this turtle, these sighs of thy soul, then he puts thy name also into that list, which he gave to his messenger, (in which commission this very word of our text, *anach*, is used) *Signabis signum super frontibus virorum suspirantium et gementium*[18], Upon all their foreheads, that sigh and groan, imprint my mark; which is ordinarily conceived by the ancients to have been the letter *tau;* of which though Calvin assign a useful, and a convenient reason, that they were marked with this letter *tau*, which is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in sign, that though they were in estimation of the world, the most abject, and the outcasts thereof, yet God set his mark upon them, with a purpose to raise them; yet St. Hierome, and the ancients for the most part assign that for the reason, why they were marked with that letter, because that letter had the form of the cross; not for any such use, or power, as the Roman church hath ascribed to that sign, but as in the persecutions of the primitive church, the martyrs at the stake, when a cry was raised, that they died for treason, for rebellion, for sedition, and could not be heard, for the clamour, to clear themselves, used then in the sight of all, who, though they could not hear them, could see them, to sign themselves with the cross, not to drive away devils, or to strengthen themselves against temptations by that sign, but by that sign to declare the cause of their death to be the profession of the Christian religion, and not treason, nor sedition. And as we in our baptism have that cross imprinted upon us, not as a part of the sacrament, or any piece of that armour, which we put on of spiritual strength, but as a protestation, whose soldiers we became: so God imprinted upon them, that sighed, and mourned, that *tau*, that letter, which had the form of the cross, that it might be an evidence, that all their crosses shall be swallowed in his cross, their sighs in his sighs, and their agonies in his. And therefore, beloved, these sighs are too spiritual a substance, to be bestowed upon worldly matters; all the love, all the ambitions, all the losses of this world, are not

[18] Ezek. ix. 4.

worth a sigh; if they were, yet thou hast none to spare, for all thy sighs are due to thy sins; bestow them there.

*Gemit*, he sighs, he groans; and then *Laboravit in gemitu;* he laboured, he travailed, he grew weary, he fainted with sighing. Not to be curious, we meet with a threefold labour in Scriptures. First there is *Labor communis*, The labour which no man may avoid; *Man is born unto travail, as the sparks fly upward*[14]; where we may note in the comparison, that it is not a dejection, a diminution, a depressing downward, but a flying upward, the true exaltation of a man, that he labours duly in a lawful calling; and this is *labor communis;* secondly there is *Labor impii*, The labour of the wicked, for, they have taught their tongues to speak lies, says David, and take great pains to deal wickedly; as it is also in Job, *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days*[15], and (as our former translation had it) *he is continually as one travailing with child;* indeed the labour is greater, to do ill, than well; to get hell, than heaven; heaven might be had with less pains, than men do bestow upon hell; and this is *labor impiorum.* And lastly, there is *Labor justorum*, The labour of the righteous, which is, *To rise early, to lie down late, and to eat the bread of sorrow;* for, though in that place, this seems to be said to be done in vain, *It is in vain to rise early, in vain to lie down late, in vain to eat the bread of sorrow*[16], yet it is with the same exception, which is there specified, that is, *Except the Lord build, it is in vain to labour, except the Lord keep the city, it is in vain to watch;* so *except the Lord give rest to his beloved, it is in vain to rise early:* in vain to travail, except God give a blessing. But when the Lord hath given thee rest, in the remission of thy sins, then comes this *labor justorum*, the labour that a righteous man is bound to, that as God hath given him a good night's rest, so he gives God a good day's work, as God hath given him rest and peace of conscience, for that which is past, so he take some pains for that which is to come, for such was David's case, and David's care, and David's labour.

Ephraim, an ancient deacon, and expositor in the Christian church, takes this labour of David, *laboravi in gemitu*, to have

[14] Job v. 7. [15] Job xv. 20. [16] Psalm cxxvii. 2.

been *in gemitu*, but *in comprimendo gemitu*, that he laboured to conceal his penance and mortification, from the sight and knowledge of others; beloved, this concealing of those things, which we put ourselves to in the ways of godliness, hath always a good use, when it is done, to avoid ostentation, and vain glory, and praise of men; and it hath otherwise, sometimes a good use, to conceal our tribulations and miseries from others, because the wicked often take occasion, from the calamities and pressures of the godly, to insult and triumph over them, and to dishonour and blaspheme their God, and to say, *Where is now your God?* And therefore it may sometimes concern us to labour to hide our miseries, *to swallow our own spittle*, as Job speaks, and to sponge up our tears in our brains, and to eat, and smother our sighs in our own bosoms. But this was not David's case now; but as he had opened himself to God, he opened himself to the world too; and as he says in another place, *Come and I will tell you, what God hath done for my soul*, so here he says, Come, and I will tell you, what I have done against my God. So he sighed, and so he groaned; he laboured, he was affected bitterly with it himself; and he declared it, he made it exemplar, and catechistical, that his dejection in himself, might be an exaltation to others; and then he was not ashamed of it, but as he said of his dancing before the ark, *If this be to be vile, I will be more vile*, so here, if this passion be weakness, I will yet be more weak; for this wind brought rain, these sighs brought tears, *All the night make I my bed to swim*, &c.

The concupiscences of man, are naturally dry powder, combustible easily, easily apt to take fire; but tears damp them, and give them a little more leisure, and us intermission and consideration. David had laboured hard; first *ad ruborem*, as physicians advise, to a redness, to a blushing, to a shame of his sin; and now *ad sudorem*, he had laboured to a sweat: for *Lacrymæ sudor animæ mœrentis*[17], Tears are the sweat of a labouring soul, and that soul that labours as David did, will sweat, as David did, in the tears of contrition; till then, till tears break out, and find a vent in outward declaration, we pant and struggle in miserable convulsions, and distortions, and distractions, and earthquakes,

[17] Hilary.

and irresolutions of the soul; I can believe, that God will have mercy upon me, if I repent, but I cannot believe that is repentance, if I cannot weep, or come to outward declarations. This is the laborious irresolution of the soul; but *Lacrymæ diluvium, et evehunt animam*[18], These tears carry up our soul, as the flood carried up the ark, higher than any hills; whether hills of power, and so above the oppression of potent adversaries, or hills of our own pride, and ambition; true holy tears carry us above all. And therefore, when the angel rebuked the people, for not destroying idolatry, *They wept*, says the text[19], there was their present remedy; and they called the name of the place Bochim, Tears, that there might be a permanent testimony of that expressing of their repentance; that that way they went to God, and in that way God received them; and that their children might say to one another, Where did God show that great mercy to our fathers? Here; here, in Bochim, that is, here in tears. And so when at Samuel's motions, and increpation, the people would testify their repentance, *They drew water*, says the story, *and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted, and said, We have sinned against the Lord*[20]. They poured water, *Ut esset symbolum lacrymarum*[21], That that might be a type, and figure, in what proportion of tears, they desired to express their repentance. For, such an effusion of tears, David may be well thought to intend, when he says, *Effundite coram Deo animam vestram, Pour out your souls before God*, pour them out in such an effusion, in a continual, and a contrite weeping. Still the prophets cry out upon idols and idolaters, *Ululate sculptilia; Howl ye idols*, and *howl ye idolaters;* he hath no hope of their weeping. And so the devil, and the damned are said to howl, but not to weep; or when they are said to weep, it is with a gnashing of teeth, which is a voice of indignation, even towards God, and not of humiliation under his hand: so also says the prophet of an impenitent sinner, *Induratæ super petram facies, They have made their faces harder than stone*[22]; Wherein? *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not wept; not sorrowed.* Out of a stone water cannot be drawn, but by miracle, though it be twice stricken; as Moses

[18] Nazianzen. [19] Judges ii. 5. [20] 1 Sam. vii. 6.
[21] Nab. Oziel. [22] Jer. v. 3.

struck the rock twice[23], yet the water came by the miraculous power of God, and not by Moses' second stroke. Though God strike this sinner twice, thrice, he will not weep: though inward terrors strike his conscience, and outward diseases strike his body, and calamities and ruin strike his estate, yet he will not confess by one tear, that these are judgments of God, but natural accidents; or if judgments, that they proceeded not from his sin, but from some decree in God, or some purpose in God, to glorify himself, by thus afflicting him, and that if he had been better, he should have fared never the better, for God's purpose must stand. Therefore says God of such in that place, *Surely they are poor*, that was plain enough, and *they are foolish* too, says God there: and God gives the reason of it, *for they know not the judgments of God;* they know not his judgments to be judgments; they ascribe all calamities to other causes, and so they turn upon other ways, and other plots, and other miserable comforters. But attribute all to the Lord; never say of anything, This falls upon me, but of all, This is laid upon me by the hand of God, and thou wilt come to him in tears. Rain-water is better than river-water; the water of heaven, tears for offending thy God, are better than tears for worldly losses; but yet come to tears of any kind, and whatsoever occasion thy tears, *Deus absterget omnem lacrymam*, there is the largeness of his bounty, *He will wipe all tears from thine eyes*[24]; but thou must have tears first: first thou must come to this weeping, or else God cannot come to this wiping; God hath not that errand to thee, to wipe tears from thine eyes, if there be none there; if thou do nothing for thyself, God finds nothing to do for thee.

David wept thus, thus vehemently, and he wept thus, thus continually; in the *night*, says our text; not that he wept not in the day: he says of himself, *My tears have been my meat, both day and night*[25], where though he name no fast, you see his diet, how that was attenuated. And so when it is said of Jerusalem, *She weepeth continually in the night*[26], it is not that she put off her weeping till night, but that she continued her days weeping to the night, and in the night: *Plorando plorabit*, says the original

[23] Numb. xx. 11.
[24] Isaiah xxv. 8.
[25] Psalm xlii. 3.
[26] Lament. i. 2.

in that place; she does weep already, and she will weep still; she puts it not off dilatorily, (I will weep, but not yet) nor she puts it not over easily, suddenly, (I have wept, and I need no more) but as God promises to his children, the *first* and *latter rain*[27], so must his children give to him again both rains, tears of the day, and tears of the night, by washing the sins of the day in the evening, and the sins of the night in the morning. But this was an addition to David's affliction in this night-weeping, that whereas the night was made for man to rest in, David could not make that use of the night. When he had proposed so great a part of his happiness to consist in this, *That he would lay him down and sleep in peace*[28], we see in the next Psalm but one, he that thought to sleep out the night, come to weep out the night. When the saints of God have that security, which St. Hierome speaks of, *Ut sanctis ipse somnus sit oratio*, They sleep securely, for their very sleep is a glorifying of God, who giveth his beloved sleep, yet David could have none of this. But why not he? *Noctem letiferam nocte compensat*[29]; first, for the place, the sin came in at those windows, at his eyes, and came in, in fire, in lust, and it must go out at those windows too, and go out in water, in the water of repentant tears; and then, for the time, as the night defiled his soul, so the sin must be expiated, and the soul washed in the night too.

And this may be some emblem, some useful intimation, how hastily repentance follows sin; David's sin is placed, but in the beginning of the night, in the evening, (*In the evening he rose, and walked upon the terrace, and saw Bathsheba*) and in the next part of time, in the night, he falls a weeping: no more between the sweetness of sin, and the bitterness of repentance, than between evening, and night; no morning to either of them, till the sun of grace arise, and shine out, and proceed to a meridional height, and make the repentance upon circumstance, to be a repentance upon the substance, and bring it to be a repentance for the sin itself, which at first was but a repentance upon some calamity, that that sin induced.

He wept then, and wept in the night; in a time, when he

[27] Joel i. 23 [28] Psalm iv. ult. [29] Eusebius.

could neither receive rest in himself, which all men had, nor receive praise from others, which all men affect. And he wept *omni nocte;* which is not only *Omnibus noctibus*, Sometime every night, but it is *Tota nocte*, Clean through the night; and he wept in that abundance, as hath put the Holy Ghost to that hyperbole in David's pen to express it, *Liquefecit stratum, natare fecit stratum*, It drowned his bed, surrounded his bed, it dissolved, it macerated, it melted his bed with that brine. Well; *Qui rigat stratum*, He that washes his bed so with repentant tears, *Non potest in cogitationem ejus libidinum pompa subrepere*[30]: Temptations take hold of us sometimes after our tears, after our repentance, but seldom or never in the act of our repentance, and in the very shedding of our tears; at least *Libidinum pompa*, The victory, the triumph of lust breaks not in upon us, in a bed, so dissolved, so surrounded, so macerated with such tears. Thy bed is a figure of thy grave; such as thy grave receives thee at death, it shall deliver thee up to judgment at last; such as thy bed receives thee at night, it shall deliver thee in the morning: if thou sleep without calling thyself to an account, thou wilt wake so, and walk so, and proceed so, without ever calling thyself to an account, till Christ Jesus call thee in the clouds. It is not intended, that thou shouldst afflict thyself so grievously, as some over-doing penitents, to put chips, and shells, and splints, and flints, and nails, and rowels of spurs in thy bed, to wound and macerate thy body so. The inventions of men, are not intended here; but here is a precept of God, implied in this precedent and practice of David, that as long as the sense of a former sin, or the inclination to a future oppresses thee, thou must not close thine eyes, thou must not take thy rest, till, as God married thy body and soul together in the creation, and shall at last crown thy body and soul together in the resurrection, so they may also rest together here, that as thy body rests in thy bed, thy soul may rest in the peace of thy conscience, and that thou never say to thy head, Rest upon this pillow, till thou canst say to thy soul, Rest in this repentance, in this peace.

Now as this sorrow of David's continued day and night, (in the day for the better edification of men, and in the night for his

[30] Hierome.

better capitulation with God) so there is a farther continuation thereof without any weariness, expressed in the next clause, *Turbatus à furore oculus meus*, as the Vulgate reads it, and *Mine eye is dimmed, for despight* or *indignation*, as our former, or as this last translation hath it, *Mine eye is consumed because of grief;* and to speak nearest to the original, *Erosus est oculus, Mine eye is eaten out with indignation.* A word or two shall be enough of each of these words, these three terms, What the *eye*, which is the subject, what this *consuming*, or *dimming*, which is the effect, and what this *grief*, or *indignation*, which is the affection, imports and offers to our application. First, *oculus*, the *eye*, is ordinarily taken in the Scriptures, *pro aspectu*, for the whole face, the looks, the countenance, the air of a man; and this air, an looks, and countenance, declares the whole habitude, and constitution of the man; as he looks, so he is: so that the *eye* here, is the whole person; and so this grief had wrought upon the whole frame and constitution of David, and decayed that; though he place it in the eye, yet it had grown over all the body. Since thou wast not able to say to thy sin, The sin shall come to mine eyes, but no farther, I will look, but not lust, I will see, but not covet, thou must not say, My repentance shall come to mine eyes, and no farther, I will shed a few tears, and no more; but (with this prophet David, and with the apostle St. Paul) thou must beat down thy body to that particular purpose, and in that proportion, as thou findest the rebellions thereof to require: thou couldst not stop the sin at thine eyes; stop not thy repentance there neither, but pursue it in wholesome mortification, through all those parts, in which the sin hath advanced his dominion over thee; and that is our use of the first word, the *eye*, the whole frame.

For the second word, which in our translations, is, in one *dimmed*, in the other *consumed*, and in the Vulgate *troubled*, a great master in the original[81] renders it well, elegantly, and naturally, out of the original, *Verminavit, tineavit*, which is such a deformity, as worms make in wood, or in books; if David's sorrow for his sins brought him to this deformity, what sorrow do they owe to their sins, who being come to a deformity by

[81] Reuchlin.

their own licentiousness, and intemperance, disguise all that by unnatural helps, to the drawing in of others, and the continuation of their former sins? The sin itself was the devil's act in thee; but in the deformity and ability, though it follow upon the sin, God hath a hand; and they that smother and suppress these by paintings, and pamperings, unnatural helps to unlawful ends, do not deliver themselves of the plague, but they hide the marks, and infect others, and wrestle against God's notifications of their former sins.

And then the last of these three words, which is here rendered *grief*, does properly signify, *indignation*, and *anger:* and therefore St. Augustine upon this place, puts himself to that question, If David's constitution be shaken, if his complexion and countenance be decayed, and withered, *Præ indignatione*, For indignation, for anger, from whom proceeds this indignation, and this anger? says that blessed father. If it proceed from God, says he, it is well that he is but *turbatus*, and not *extinctus*, that he is but troubled, and not distracted, but shaken, and not overthrown; but overthrown, and not ground to powder, not trodden as flat as dirt in the streets, as the prophet speaks. For David himself had told us but a few Psalms before, That when the *Son* is *angry*[22], (and when we speak of the Son, we intend a person more sensible, and so more compassionate of our miseries, than when we speak of God, of God considered in the height of his majesty) and *but a little angry*, (which amounts not to this provocation of God, which David had fallen into here) we may *perish;* and *perish in the way;* perish in a half repentance, before we perfect our reconciliation: in the way so, before we come to our end; or in the way, in these outward actions of repentance, if they be hypocritically, or occasionally, or fashionally, or perfunctorily performed, and not with a right heart towards God. Though this be the way, we may perish in the way.

Now Aquinas places this fury (as the Vulgate calls it, this *indignation*) in Absalom, and not in David; he takes David's sorrow to rise out of his son's rebellion, and furious prosecution thereof; that David was thus vehemently affected for the fault of another: and truly it is a holy tenderness, and an exemplar

[22] Psalm ii. ult.

disposition to be so sensible, and compassionate for the sins of other men; though Absalom could not have hurt David, David would have grieved for his unnatural attempt to do it. So in Aquinas' sense, it is *Excandescentia pro inimicis*, A sorrow for his enemies; Not for his own danger from them, but for their sin in themselves; but Gregory Nyssen takes it, *De excandescentia in inimicos*, For an indignation against his enemies: and that David speaks this by way of confession, and accusation of himself, as of a fault, that he was too soon transported to an impatience, and indignation against them, though enemies; and taking that sense, we see, how quickly even the saints of God put themselves beyond the ability of making that petition sincerely, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;* how hard it is even for a good man to forgive an enemy; and how hard it is, *Nihil in peccatore odisse nisi peccatum*, To sever the sin from the sinner, and to hate the fault, and not the man.

But leaving Thomas and Gregory, Aquinas and Nyssen to that exposition, in which (I think) they are singularly singular, either that this sorrow in David was a charitable and compassionate sense of others' faults, which is Aquinas' way, or that it was a confession of uncharitableness in himself towards others, which is Gregory's way, the whole stream (for the most part) of ancient expositors divide themselves into these two channels; either that this indignation conceived by David, which withered and decayed him, was a holy scorn and indignation against his own sins, that such wretched things as those should separate him from his God, and from his inheritance, according to that chain of affections which the apostle makes[33], That godly sorrow brings a sinner to a care; he is no longer careless, negligent of his ways; and that care to a clearing of himself, not to clear himself by way of excuse, or disguise, but to clear himself by way of physic, by humble confession; and then that clearing brings him to an indignation, to a kind of holy scorn, and wonder, how that temptation could work so; such an affection as we conceive to have been in the spouse, when she said, *Lavi pedes, I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* I have emptied my soul by confession, is it possible I should charge it with new transgressions? Or else

[33] 2 Cor. vii.

they place this affection, this indignation in God; and then they say, it was an apprehension of the anger of God, to be expressed upon him in the day of judgment; and against this vermination, (as the original denotes) against this gnawing of the worm, that may bore through, and sink the strongest vessel that sails in the seas of this world, there is no other varnish, no other liniment, no other medicament, no other pitch nor rosin against this worm, but the blood of Christ Jesus: and therefore whensoever this worm, this apprehension of God's future indignation, reserved for the judgment, bites upon thee, be sure to present to it the blood of thy Saviour: never consider the judgment of God for sin alone, but in the company of the mercies of Christ. It is but the hissing of the serpent, and the whispering of Satan, when he surprises thee in a melancholy midnight of dejection of spirit, and lays thy sins before thee then; look not upon thy sins so inseparably, that thou canst not see Christ too: come not to a confession to God, without consideration of the promises of his Gospel; even the sense and remorse of sin is a dangerous consideration, but when the cup of salvation stands by me, to keep me from fainting. David himself could not get off when he would; but (as he complains there, which is the last act of his sorrow to be considered in this, which is all his part, and all our first part) *Inveteravit, He waxed old because of all his enemies.*

The difference is not of much importance, whether it be *inveteravi*, or *inveteravit;* in the first, or in the third person. Whether David's eyes, or David himself be thus decayed, and waxen old, imports little. But yet that which Bellarmine collects, upon this difference, imports much. For, because the Vulgate edition, and the Septuagint, (such a Septuagint as we have now) read this in the first person of David himself, *inveteravi*, and the Hebrew hath it in the third, *inveteravit*, Bellarmine will needs think, that the Hebrew, the original, is falsified and corrupted; still in advancement of that dangerous position of theirs, that their translation is to be preferred before the original; and that is an insufferable tyranny, and an idolatrous servility. The translation is a reverend translation; a translation to which the church of God owes much; but gold will make an idol as well as wood, and to make any translation equal, or better than the original, is

an idolatrous servility. It is true, that that which is said here in the third person, implies the first; and it is David, that after his sighing, and fainting with that, after his weeping, and dissolving with that, after his consuming, and withering with that, foresees no rescue, no escape, *inveteravit*, he waxes old amongst his enemies. Who were his enemies, and what was this age that he speaks of? It is of best use to pursue the spiritual sense of this Psalm, and so his enemies were his sins; and David found that he had not got the victory over any one enemy, any one sin; another's blood did not extinguish the lustful heat of his own, nor the murder of the husband, the adultery with the wife: change of sin is not an overcoming of sin; he that passes from sin to sin, without repentance, (which was David's case for a time) still leaves an enemy behind him; and though he have no present assault from his former enemy, no temptation to any act of his former sin, yet he is still in the midst of his enemies; under condemnation of his past, as well as of his present sins; as unworthy a receiver of the sacrament, for the sins of his youth done forty years ago, if those sins were never repented, though so long discontinued, as for his ambition, or covetousness, or indevotion of this present day. These are his enemies; and then this is the age that grows upon him, the age that David complains of, *I am waxen old;* that is, grown into habits of these sins. There is an old age of our natural condition, *We shall wax old as doth a garment*[84]; David would not complain of that which all men desire; to wish to be old, and then grudge to be old, when we are come to it, cannot consist with moral constancy. There is an old age expressed in that phrase, *the old man*, which the apostle speaks of, which is that natural corruption and disposition to sin, cast upon us by Adam; but *that old man was crucified in Christ*, says the apostle[85]; and was not so only from that time when Christ was actually crucified, one thousand six hundred years ago, but from that time that a second Adam was promised to the first, in Paradise; and so that Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, from the beginning delivered all them, to whom the means ordained by God, (as circumcision to them, baptism to us) were afforded; and in that respect, David was not

[84] Psalm cii. 26. [85] Rom. vi. 6.

under that old age, but was become a new creature. Nor as the law was called the old law, which is another age also; for to them who understood that law aright, the new law, the Gospel, was enwrapped in the old: and so David as well as we, might be said *to serve God in the newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*[36]; so that this was not the age that oppressed him.

The age that oppresses the sinner, is that when he is grown old in sin, he is grown weak in strength, and become less able to overcome that sin then, than he was at beginning. Blindness contracted by age, doth not deliver him from objects of temptations; he sees them, though he be blind; deafness doth not deliver him from discourses of temptation; he hears them though he be deaf; nor lameness doth not deliver him from pursuit of temptation; for in his own memory he sees, and hears, and pursues all his former sinful pleasures, and every night, every hour sins over all the sins of many years that are passed. *That which waxeth old, is ready to vanish*[37], says the apostle: if we would let them go, they would go; and whether we will or no, they leave us for the ability of practice; but *thesaurizamus*, we treasure them up in our memories, and we treasure up the wrath of God with them, against the day of wrath[38]; and whereas one calling of our sins to our memories by way of confession, would do us good, and serve our turns, this often calling them in a sinful delight, in the memory of them, exceeds the sin itself, when it was committed[39], because it is more unnatural now, than it was then, and frustrates the pardon of that sin, when it was repented. To end this branch, and this part, so humble was this holy prophet, and so apprehensive of his own debility, and so far from an imaginary infallibility of falling no more, as that after all his agonies, and exercises, and mortifications, and prayer, and sighs, and weeping, still he finds himself in the midst of enemies, and of his old enemies; for not only temptations to new sins, but even the memory of old, though formerly repented, arise against us, arise in us, and ruin us. And so we pass from these pieces which constitute our first part, *quid factum*, what David upon the sense of his case did, to the other, *quid faciendum*, what by

[36] Rom. vii. 6. [37] Heb. viii. 13. [38] Rom. ii. 5. [39] Ezek. xxiii. 19.

his example we are to do, and what is required of us, after we have repented, and God hath remitted the sin.

Out of this passage here in this psalm, and out of that history, where Nathan says to David, *The Lord hath put away thy sin*[40], and yet says after, *The child that is born to thee shall surely die*, and out of that story, where David repents earnestly his sin, committed in the numbering of his people, and says; Now, now that I have repented, *Now I beseech thee O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly*[41], yet David was to endure one of those three calamities, of *famine*, *war*, or *pestilence;* and out of some other such places as these, some men have imagined a doctrine, that after our repentance, and after God had thereupon pardoned our sin, yet he leaves the punishment belonging to that sin unpardoned; though not all the punishment, not the eternal, yet say they, There belongs a temporary punishment too, and that God does not pardon, but exacts, and exacts in the nature of a punishment, and more, by way of satisfaction to his justice.

Now, *stipendium peccati mors est*, there is the punishment for sin, *The reward of sin is death.* If there remain no death, there remains no punishment: *For the reward of sin is death*, and death complicated in itself, death wrapped in death; and what is so intricate, so entangling as death? Whoever got out of a winding-sheet? It is death aggravated by itself; death weighed down by death: and what is so heavy as death? Whoever threw off his grave-stone? It is death multiplied by itself; and what is so infinite as death? Whoever told over the days of death? It is *morte morieris*, a double death, eternal, and temporary. Temporal, and spiritual death. Now, the temporary, the natural death, God never takes away from us, he never pardons that punishment, because he never takes away that sin that occasioned it, which is original sin; to what sanctification soever a man comes, original sin lives to his last breath. And therefore, *statutum est*, that decree stands, *semel mori*, that every man must die once[42]; but for any *bis mori*, for twice dying, for eternal death upon any man, as man, if God consider him not as an impotent sinner, there is

[40] 2 Sam. xii. 13. [41] 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. [42] Heb. ix. 27.

no such invariable decree; for, that death being also the punishment for actual sin, if he take away the cause, the sin, he takes away that effect, that death also; for this death itself, eternal death, we all agree that it is taken away with the sin; and then for other calamities in this life, which we call, *Morticulas*, little deaths, the children, the issue, the offspring, the propagation of death, if we would speak properly, no affliction, no judgment of God in this life, hath in it exactly the nature of a punishment; not only not the nature of satisfaction, but not the nature of a punishment. We call not coin, base coin, till the allay be more than the pure metal: God's judgments are not punishments, except there be more danger than love, more justice than mercy in them; and that is never; for *miserationes ejus super omnia opera*, his mercies are above all his works: in his first work, in the creation, his *Spirit*, the Holy Ghost, *moved upon the face of the waters;* and still upon the face of all our waters, (as waters are emblems of tribulation in all the Scriptures) his Spirit, the Spirit of comfort, moves too; and as the waters produced the first creatures in the creation, so tribulations offer us the first comforts, sooner than prosperity does. God executes no judgment upon man in this life, but in mercy; either in mercy to that person, in his sense thereof, if he be sensible, or at least in mercy to his church, in the example thereof, if he be not: there is no person to whom we can say, that God's corrections are punishments, any otherwise than medicinal, and such, as he may receive amendment by, that receives them; neither does it become us in any case, to say God lays this upon him, because he is so ill, but because he may be better.

But here our consideration is only upon the godly, and such as by repentance stand upright in his favour; and even in them, our adversaries say, That after the remission of their sins, there remains a punishment, and a punishment by way of satisfaction, to be borne for that sin, which is remitted. But since they themselves tell us, that in baptism God proceeds otherwise, and pardons there all sin, and all punishment of sin, which should be inflicted in the next world, (for children newly baptized, do not suffer anything in purgatory) and that this holds not only *in*

*baptismo fluminis*, in the sacrament of baptism, but *in baptismo sanguinis*, in the baptism of blood too; (for in martyrdom, as St. Augustine says, *Injuriam facit martyri*, He wrongs a martyr that prays for a martyr, as though he were not already in heaven, so he suspects a martyr, that thinks that martyr goes to purgatory) and since they say, that he can do so in the other sacrament too, and in repentance, which they call, and justly, *Secundam post naufragium tabulam*, That whereas baptism hath once delivered us from shipwreck, in original sin, this repentance delivers us after baptism, from actual sin; since God can pardon, without reserving any punishment, since God does so in baptism and martyrdom, since out of baptism or martyrdom, it appears often, that *de facto*, he hath done so, (for he enjoined no penance to the man sick of the palsy, when he said, *Son be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee*[43], sins, and punishments too. He intimated no such after reckoning to her, of whom he said, *Many sins are forgiven her*[44]; sins, and punishments too. He left no such future satisfaction in that parable upon the Publican, that *departed to his house justified*[45]; justified from sins, and punishments too. And when he had declared Zaccheus to be the son of Abraham, and said, *This day is salvation come unto thy house*[46], he did not charge this blessed inheritance with any such incumbrance, that he should still be subject to old debts, to make satisfaction by bodily afflictions for former sins) since God can do this, and does so in baptism, and martyrdom, and hath done this very often, out of baptism, or martyrdom, in repentance, we had need of clearer evidence than they have offered to produce yet, that God does otherwise at any time; that at any time he pardons the sin, and retains the punishment, by way of satisfaction. If their market should fail, that no man would buy indulgences (as of late years it was brought low, when they vented ten indulgences in America for one in Europe) if the fire of purgatory were quenched, or slackened, that men would not be so prodigal to buy out fathers' or friends' souls, from thence; if commutation of penance were so moderated amongst them, that those penances, and satisfac-

[43] Matt. ix. 2. [44] Luke vii. 47. [45] Luke xviii. 14. [46] Luke xix. 9.

tions, which they make so necessary, were not commuted to money, and brought them in no profit, they would not be perhaps so vehement in maintenance of this doctrine.

To leave such imaginations with their authors; we see David did enjoin himself penance, and impose upon himself heavy afflictions after he had asked, and no doubt, received assurance of the mercy of God, in the remission of his sins. Why did he so? St. Augustine observes out of the words of this text, that because some of David's afflictions are expressed in the preter tense, as things already past, and some in the future, as things to come, (for it is *Laboravi*, I have mourned, and it is *Natare faciam*, I will wash my bed with tears) so that something David confesses he had done, and something he professes that he will do, therefore David hath a special regard to his future state, and he proceeds with God, not only by that way of holy worship, by way of confession, what he had done, but by another religious worship of God too, by way of vow, what he would do. David understood his own conscience well; and was willing to husband it, to manure, and cultivate it well; he knew what ploughing, what harrowing, what weeding, and watering, and pruning it needed, and so perhaps might be trusted with himself, and he his own spiritual physician. This is not every one's case. Those that are not so perfect in the knowledge of their own estate, (as it is certain the most are not) the church ever took into her care; and therefore it is true, that in the primitive church, there were heavy penitential canons, and there were public penances enjoined to sinners: either *ad explorationem*, when the church had cause to be jealous, and to suspect the hearty repentance of the party, they made this trial of their obedience, to submit them to that heavy penance; or else *ad ædificationem*, to satisfy the church which was scandalized by their sins before; or *ad exercitationem*, to keep them in continual practice, the better to resist future temptations, and relapses; for to them this penance was an unction, as to one that was to wrestle with himself, and as the buckling on of an armour upon one that was to fight God's battles, in his own bowels.

If from some of the fathers there have fallen sometimes some phrases, which may have seemed to some to attribute something

more to man's works, to his after-afflictions, and post-penances, some power of satisfaction to the justice of God, Bellarmine himself hath given us one good caution, That we must be very wary in understanding those phrases; for he finds it very inconvenient to accept all that the fathers have said, in their manner of expressing themselves in that point. We will add thus much more, for the better understanding of repentance in the root, and the fruits of repentance, that there is such an indissoluble knot, such an individual marriage between those parts of repentance, which we call *Partes constitutivas*, Essential parts of repentance, and those parts, which we call *consecutivas*, which do infallibly concur, or immediately follow upon repentance, these two are so inseparable; there is not only such a contiguity, but such a continuity in them, not only such a vicinity, but such an identity, between repentance, and the fruits of repentance, that many reverend persons, in their expositions, and meditations have presented, and named one for the other, and have called those subsequent, and subsidiary things, by the name of repentance itself. Hence it comes, that whereas repentance is only *conversio*, a turning, and this conversion, this turning hath only *terminum a quo*, something to turn from, and that is sin, and *terminum ad quem*, something to turn to, and that is God, those things which are indeed but helps to hold us in that station, and in that posture when we are turned from sin upon God, they have called by the names of repentance itself, as parts of it; and so these bodily afflictions, which we speak of, being indeed to be embraced for that use, to maintain us in that good disposition, to which our repentance hath brought us, have sometimes been called parts of repentance, even by godly, and learned expositors; and by occasion of that easiness in them, in calling these things thus, in after-times, salvation itself, which God gives upon repentance, hath been attributed to these post-penances, and after-afflictions, which because they do always accompany repentance, have sometimes been called repentance.

The meaning of ancient and later men too therein, hath been to impose a necessity of taking these medicinal physics, these after-afflictions, for that use of holding us in that state, to which we are brought; but their meaning hath ever been too, to exclude

satisfaction, properly so termed. *Pœnitentia est, mala præterita plangere*[47], This is repentance says that father, to lament and bewail our former sins; but, this is not all that he requires, but he adds, *Plangenda iterum non committere*, This belongs to repentance too, not to return to those sins, which we have bewailed. For, repentance is *Vindicta semper puniens, quod dolet se commisisse*[48], says another also; A man truly penitent is a daily executioner upon himself, and punishes after, the sins which he hath committed before. Here we see that both those blessed fathers, St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose, attribute these after-afflictions, and post-penances to repentance, and call them by that name, repentance. But yet, not to leave these blessed fathers under the danger of mis-interpretation, and ill-application of words well intended, we consider the same fathers in other places too; *Lacrymas Petri lego, satisfactionem non lego*[49], I read of Peter's tears, not of his satisfaction. So if these post-penances had the nature of punishments, yet these punishments had not the nature of satisfaction. But *Calamitates ante remissionem sunt supplicia, post remissionem exercitationes*[50], says the other of those fathers: Till God be pacified by our repentance, his corrections have more of the nature of punishments, because considered so, we are in the state of enemies, and he may justly punish; but after God hath remitted the sin, the after-afflictions are but from a physician, not from an executioner, and intended to keep us in our station, and not to throw us lower; so that they are neither properly satisfactions, nor punishments. For, for satisfaction to the justice of God, *Nec si te excories, satisfacere possis*[51], If thou flay thyself with hair-cloths, and whips, it is nothing towards satisfaction of that infinite Majesty, which thou hast violated, and wounded by thy sin; and then for the other, that is, punishment after remission, *Ubi misericordia, pœnæ locus non est*[52], They are incompatible things, if God have reserved a disposition and purpose to punish, he hath not pardoned.

So that howsoever something said by them, may seem to make these after-afflictions to be necessary to repentance, and, in a large sense, parts of repentance, yet neither did they put that value

[47] Ambrose. [48] Augustine. [49] Ambrose.
[50] Augustine. [51] Origen. [52] Chrysostom.

upon man's act, that man should be able to satisfy God, nor that delusion upon God's act, that God should pretend to pardon, and yet punish. We are not disposed to wrangle about words, and names; the school may admit that exercise, but not the pulpit. If upon admittance, that these after-afflictions might be called punishments, they had not inferred a satisfaction, and thereupon super-induced a satisfaction after this life, and so a purgatory, and so indulgencies, and carried their Babel so many stories high, we to advance the doctrine of a necessity of these disciplines, and mortifications, even after God hath sealed to our consciences the remission of our sin, would not abhor, nor decline the name, we would not be afraid to call them penances, nor punishments, nor satisfactions; for when St. Chrysostom in his time, had no occasion to be afraid of such a mis-interpretation, he was not afraid to call them so; *Non remisit supplicium*, says he; God hath not forgiven the punishment; and *Imponit pœnam*, God exacts a punishment at thy hands; but yet, though St. Chrysostom suspected no such mis-interpretations, the Holy Ghost who foresaw that they would come, prevents all dangerous mis-constructions, and directs St. Chrysostom's pen, thus, God does all this, says he, *Non exigens supplicium de peccatis, sed corrigens ad futurum;* Whatsoever I have said of punishments, it is not that in that punishment, God hath any relation to the former, but to the future sin, not to our lapse, but to our relapse, not to that which he hath seen, but to that which he foresees would fall upon us, if he did not, if we did not prevent it with these medicinal assistances: and, as long as it is but so, call them what you will, yet here is no foundation laid, no materials, no stone brought to the building of the Roman satisfaction, or purgatory, or indulgencies.

Howsoever therefore you exclude dangerous names, do not, upon colour of that, exclude necessary things: howsoever you have delivered yourselves to the mercy of God, and he hath delivered a seal of his mercy to you, inwardly in his spirit, outwardly in his sacrament, yet there are *Amaræ sagittæ ex dulci manu Dei*, (as Nazianzen calls afflictions after repentance) sharp arrows out of the sweet hand of God; corrections, by which God intends to establish us in that spiritual health, to which our repentance,

by his grace, hath brought us: remember still, that this which David did for the present, and that which he promised he would do for the future, both together made up the reason of his prayer to God, by which he desired God in the former verses, to *return* to him, to *deliver* his soul, and to *save* him; he had had no reason, no ground of his prayer, though he had done something already, if he had not proposed to himself something more to be done. There is a preparation before, and there is a preservation after required at our hands, if we study a perfect recovery, and cure of our souls. And as St. Gregory notes well, there is a great deal of force in David's possessive, in his word of appropriation, *Meus*, *lectus meus*, and *oculus meus*, It is his bed that he washed, and they are his eyes that washed it: he bore the affliction himself, and trusted not to that which others had suffered by way of supererogation. Sometimes, when the children of great persons offend at school, another person is whipped for them, and that affects them, and works upon a good nature; but if that person should take physic for them in a sickness, it would do them no good: God's corrections upon others may work by way of example upon thee; but because thou art sick for physic, take it thyself. Trust not to the treasure of the church; neither the imaginary treasure of the church of Rome, which pretends an inexhaustible mine of the works of other men, to distribute and bestow; no, nor to the true treasure of the true church, that is, absolution, upon confession, and repentance; no, trust not to the merits of Christ himself, in their application to thee, without a *lectus tuus*, and an *oculus tuus*, except thou remember thy sins in thy bed, and pour out thy tears from thine eyes, and fulfil the sufferings of Christ in thyself. Nothing can be added to Christ's merits; that is true: but something must be added to thee; a disposition in thee, for the application of that which is his: not, that thou canst begin this disposition in thyself, till God offer it, but that thou mayest resist it, now it is offered, and reject it again, after it is received. Trust not in others, not in the church, nor in Christ himself, so, as to do nothing for thyself; nor trust not in that, which thou doest for thyself, so, as at any time to think, thou hast done enough and needest do no more: but when thou hast past the signet, that thou hast found the signature of

God's hand and seal, in a manifestation, that the marks of his grace are upon thee, when thou hast past his privy seal, that his spirit bears witness with thy spirit, that thy repentance hath been accepted by him, when thou hast past the great seal, in the holy and blessed sacrament publicly administered, do not suspect the goodness of God, as though all were not done that were necessary for thy salvation, if thou wert to have thy transmigration out of this world this hour; but yet, as long as thou continuest in the vale of tentations, continue in the vale of tears too; and though thou have the seal of reconciliation, plead that seal to the church, (which is God's tribunal, and judgment-seat upon earth) in a holy life, and works of example to others, and look daily, look hourly upon the *ita quod* of that pardon, upon the covenants and conditions, with which it is given, that if by neglecting those medicinal helps, those auxiliary forces, those subsidies of the kingdom of heaven, those after-afflictions, (choose whether you will call them by the name of penance, or no) you relapse into former sins, your present repentance, and your present seal of that repentance, the sacrament, shall rise up against you at the last day, and to that sentence (you did not feed, you did not clothe, you did not harbour me in the poor) shall this be added, as the aggravation of all, you did repent, and you did receive the seal, but you did not pursue that repentance, nor perform the conditions required at your hands.

But we are here met, by God's gracious goodness, in a better disposition; with a sincere repentance of all our former sins, and with a deliberate purpose, as those Israelites made their pouring out of water a testimony of dissolving themselves into holy tears, to make this fast from bodily sustenance an inchoation of a spiritual fast, in abstinence from all that may exasperate our God against us; that so, though not for that, yet thereby our prayers may be the more acceptable to our glorious God, in our gracious Saviour, to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, first, that as he is the King of kings, he will establish, and prosper that crown, which he hath set upon the head of his Anointed over us here, and hereafter crown that crown with another crown, a better crown, a crown of immarcessible glory in the kingdom of heaven, and in the mean time, make him his bulwark, and his rampart,

against all those powers, which seek to multiply mitres, or crowns, to the disquiet and prejudice of Christendom: and then, that as he is the Lord of lords, he will inspire them, to whom he hath given lordship over others in this world, with a due consideration, that they also have a Lord over them, even in this world; and that he, and they, and we have one Lord over us all, in the other world: that as he is the Bishop and High Priest over our souls, he vouchsafe to continue in our bishops, a holy will, and a competent power to superintend faithfully over his church, that they for their parts, when they depart from hence, may deliver it back into his hands, in the same form, and frame, in which his blessed spirit delivered it into their hands, in their predecessors, in the primitive institution thereof: that as he is the Angel of the great council, he vouchsafe to direct the great council of this kingdom, to consider still, that as he works in this world by means, so it concerns his glory, that they expedite the supply of such means as may do his work, and may carry home the testimony of good consciences now, and in their posterity have the thanks of posterity, for their behaviour in this parliament; that as he is the God of peace, he will restore peace to Christendom; that as he is the Lord of hosts, he will fight our battles, who have no other end in our wars, but his peace; and that after this fast, which in the bodily and ghostly part too, we perform to-day, and vow and promise for our whole lives, he will bring us to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, in that kingdom, which our Saviour Christ Jesus hath purchased for us, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood, *Amen*.

## SERMON LIII.

### *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

PSALM vi. 8, 9, 10.

**Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.**

**The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.**

**Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.**

THIS is David's profligation and discomfiture of his enemies; this is an act of true honour, a true victory, a true triumph, to keep the field, to make good one station, and yet put the enemy to flight. A man may perchance be safe in a retreat, but the honour, the victory, the triumph lies in enforcing the enemy to fly. To that is David come here, to such a thankful sense of a victory; in which we shall first consider David's thankfulness, that is, his manner of declaring God's mercy, and his security in that mercy; which manner is, that he durst come to an open defiance, and protestation, and hostility, without modifications, or disguises, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.* And then, secondly, we shall see his reason, upon which he grounded this confidence, and this spiritual exultation, which was a pregnant reason, a reason that produced another reason; *The Lord hath heard my supplication, the Lord will hear my prayer;* upon no premises doth any conclusion follow so logically, so sincerely, so powerfully, so imperiously, so undeniably, as upon this, *The Lord hath, and therefore the Lord will.* But then what was this prayer? that we may know, whether it were a prayer to be drawn into practice, and imitation, or no. It is not argument enough, that it was so, because God heard it then; for we are not bound, nay, we are not allowed to pray all such prayers, as good men have prayed, and as God hath heard. But here the prayer was this, *Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and sore vexed, let them return, and be ashamed suddenly.* But this is a malediction, an imprecation of mischief upon others; and will good men

pray so? or will God hear that? Because that is an holy problem, and an useful interrogatory, we shall make it a third part, or a conclusion rather, to inquire into the nature, and into the avowableness, and exemplariness of this, in which David seems to have been transported with some passion.

So that our parts will be three, the building itself, David's thanksgiving in his exultation, and declaration, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity;* and then the foundation of this building, *For God hath heard, and therefore God will hear;* and lastly, the prospect of this building, David contemplates and looks over again the prayer that he had made, and in a clear understanding, and in a rectified conscience, he finds that he may persist in that prayer, and he doth so: *Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and sore vexed, let them return, and be ashamed suddenly.*

First then we consider David's thankfulness; but why is it so long before David leads us to that consideration? Why hath he deferred so primary a duty, to so late a place, to so low a room, to the end of the psalm? The psalm hath a deprecatory part, that God would forbear him, and a postulatory part, that God would hear him, and grant some things to him, and a gratulatory part, a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Now the deprecatory part is placed in the first place, ver. 1. For if it were not so, if we should not first ground that, *That God should not rebuke us in his anger, nor chasten us in his hot displeasure,* but leave ourselves open to his indignation, and his judgments, we could not live to come to a second petition; our sins, and judgments due to our sins, require our first consideration; therefore David begins with the deprecatory prayer, that first God's anger may be removed: but then that deprecatory prayer, wherein he desired God to forbear him, spends but one verse of the psalm; David would not insist upon that long: when I have penitently confessed my sins, I may say with Job, *My flesh is not brass, nor my bones stones, that I can bear the wrath of the Lord;* but yet I must say with Job too, *If the Lord kill me, yet will I trust in him.* God hath not asked me, what shall I do for thee, but of himself he hath done more, than I could have proposed to myself in a wish, or to him in a prayer. Nor will I ask God, *Quousque,* How long

shall my foes increase? how long wilt thou fight on their side against me? but surrender myself entirely, in an *adveniat regnum*, and a *fiat voluntas*, *thy kingdom come*, and *thy will be done*. David makes it his first work, to stay God's anger in a deprecatory prayer, but he stays not upon that long, he will not prescribe his physician, what he shall prescribe to him, but leaves God to his own medicines, and to his own method. But then the postulatory prayer, what he begs of God, employs six verses: as well to show us, that our necessities are many; as also that if God do not answer us at the beginning of our prayer, our duty is still to pursue that way, to continue in prayer. And then the third part of the psalm, which is the gratulatory part, his giving of thanks, is, shall we say deferred, or rather reserved to the end of the psalm, and exercises only those three verses which are our text. Not that the duty of thanksgiving is less than that of prayer; for if we could compare them, it is rather greater; because it contributes more to God's glory, to acknowledge by thanks, that God hath given, than to acknowledge by prayer, that God can give. But therefore might David be later and shorter here, in expressing that duty of thanks, first, because being reserved to the end, and close of the psalm, it leaves the best impression in the memory. And therefore it is easy to observe, that in all metrical compositions, of which kind the Book of Psalms is, the force of the whole piece, is for the most part left to the shutting up; the whole frame of the poem is a bearing out of a piece of gold, but the last clause is as the impression of the stamp, and that is it that makes it current. And then also, because out of his abundant manner of expressing his thankfulness to God, in every other place thereof, his whole Book of Psalms is called, *Sepher tehillim*, a Book of praise and thanksgiving, he might reserve his thanks here to the last place; and lastly, because natural and moral men are better acquainted with the duty of gratitude, of thanksgiving, before they come to the Scriptures, than they are with the other duty of repentance, which belongs to prayer; for in all Solomon's Books, you shall not find half so much of the duty of thankfulness, as you shall in Seneca and in Plutarch. No book of ethics, of moral doctrine, is come to us, wherein there is not, almost in every leaf, some

detestation, some anathema against ingratitude; but of repentance, not a word amongst them all. And therefore in that duty of prayer, which presumes repentance, (for he must stand *rectus in curia* that will pray) David hath insisted longest; and because he would enter, and establish a man, upon a confidence in God, he begins with a deprecation of his anger; for but upon that ground, no man can stand; and because he would dismiss him with that which concerns him most, he chooses to end in a thanksgiving.

Therefore at last he comes to his thanks. Now this is so poor a duty, if we proportion it to the infiniteness of God's love unto us, our thanks, as we may justly call it nothing at all. But *Amor Dei affectus, non contractus*[1], The love of God is not a contract, a bargain, he looks for nothing again, and yet he looks for thanks, for that is nothing, because there is nothing done in it, it is but speaking; *Gratias dicere, est gratias agere*[2], To utter our thanks to God, is all our performance of thankfulness. It is not so amongst us; *Vix, aut nunquam apud nos puram, et merum beneficium*[3]; Every man that gives, gives out of design, and as it conduces to his ends: *Donat in hamo*[4], There is a hook in every benefit, that sticks in his jaws that takes that benefit, and draws him whither the benefactor will. God looks for nothing, nothing to be done in the way of exact recompense, but yet, as he that makes a clock, bestows all that labour upon the several wheels, that thereby the bell might give a sound, and that thereby the hand might give knowledge to others how the time passes; so this is the principal part of that thankfulness, which God requires from us, that we make open declarations of his mercies, to the winning and confirming of others.

This David does in this noble and ingenuous publication, and protestation, I have strength enough, and company enough, power enough, and pleasure enough, joy enough, and treasure enough, honour enough, and recompense enough in my God alone, in him I shall surely have all which you can pretend to give, and therefore *Discedite à me, Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity;* here is then first a valediction, a parting with his old company, but it is a valediction, with a malediction, with an imprecation

[1] Bernard.
[2] Augustine.
[3] Philo Judæus.
[4] Martial.

of God's justice, upon their contempts and injuries. There was in the mouth of Christ, sometimes, such a *discede*, such an *abito*, as that farewell was a welcome; as when he said to the ruler, *Abito, Go thy way, thy son liveth*[5]; and when he said to the woman, *Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee*[6]. This going was a staying with him still; here the *abite*, and *venite* was all one. He that goes about his worldly business, and goes about them in God's name, in the fear and favour of God, remains in God's presence still. When the angels of God are sent to visit his children, in the midst of Sodom, or where they lie, and languish in sordid and nasty corners, and in the loathsomeness of corrupt and infectious diseases, or where they faint in miserable dungeons, this commission, this *discedite*, go to that Sodom, to that spital, to that dungeon, puts not those angels out of the presence of God. No descent into hell, of what kind soever you conceive that descent into hell to have been, put the Son of God out of heaven, by descending into hell; *no discede*, no leave, no commandment that God gives us, to do the works of our calling here, excludes us from him; but as the saints of God shall follow the Lamb, wheresoever he goes in heaven, so the Lamb of God shall follow his saints, wheresoever they go upon earth, if they walk sincerely. Christ uses not then as yet, as long as we are in this world, this *discede* of David, to bid any man, any sinner to depart from him: but there shall come a time, when Christ shall take David's *discede*, the words of this text into his mouth, with as much and more bitterness than David does here, *Nescivi nos*, I never knew ye, and therefore *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*.

So have you his protestation, his proclamation, they must avoid; but who? who be these that David dismisses here? Take them to be those of his own house, his servants, and officers in near places, whose service he had used to ill purposes, (as David's person, and rank, and history directs us upon that consideration) and we shall find all such persons wrapt up in this danger, that they dare not discharge themselves, they dare not displace, nor disgrace those men, to whom, by such employments, they have given that advantage over themselves, as that it is not safe to them, to offend such a servant. *Natura nec hostem habet, nec*

[5] John iv. 46. [6] Luke vii. 50.

*amicum rex*, says a wise statesman[7]; In nature, (that is, in the nature of greatness, and, as great) great persons consider no man to be so much a friend, nor to be so much an enemy, but that they will fall out with that friend, and be reconciled to that enemy, to serve their own turn, says that statesman. But yet when great persons trust servants with such secret actions, as may bring them into contempt at home, or danger abroad, by those vices, if they should be published, they cannot come when they would, to this *Discedite, Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.*

We have this evidently, and unavoidably, we cannot but see it, and say it, in this example which is before us, even in King David. He had employed Joab in such services, as that he stood in fear of him, and endured at his hands that behaviour, and that language, *Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants that have saved thy life, and thy sons, and daughters, and wives, and concubines, thou regardest neither thy princes, nor servants; but come out, and speak comfortably unto them, for I swear by the Lord, except thou do come out, there will not tarry one man with thee this night*[8]. David endured all this, for he knew that Joab had that letter in his cabinet, which he writ to him for the murder of Uriah, and he never came to this *discedite*, to remove Joab from him in his life, but gave it in commandment to his son, *Let not Joab's hoary head go down to the grave in peace*[9]: here is the misery of David, he cannot discharge himself of that servant when he will, and here the misery of that servant, that at one time or other he will; and he is a short lived man, whose ruin a jealous prince studies. Because the text invited us, commanded, and constrained us to do so, we put this example in a court, but we need not dazzle ourselves with that height; every man in his own house may find it, that to those servants, which have served him in ill actions, he dares not say, *Discedite, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

Thus then it is; if those whom David dismisses here were his own servants, it was an expressing of his thankfulness to God, and a duty that lay upon him, to deliver himself of such servants. But other expositors take these men to be men of another sort,

[7] Polybius. [8] 2 Sam. xix. [9] 1 Kings ii.

men that came to triumph over him in his misery, men that *Persecuted him whom God had smitten, and added to the sorrow of him whom God had wounded*[10], as himself complains; men that pretended to visit him, yet when they came, *They spoke lies, their hearts gathered iniquity to themselves, and when they went abroad they told it*[11]; men that said to one another, *When shall he die, and his name perish*[12]? Here also was a declaration of the powerfulness of God's Spirit in him, that he could triumph over the triumpher, and exorcise those evil spirits, and command them away, whose coming was to dishonour God, in his dishonour; and to argue and conclude out of his ruin, that either his God was a weak God, or a cruel God, that he could not, or would not deliver his servants from destruction.

That David could command them away, whose errand was to blaspheme God, and whose staying in a longer conversation might have given him occasion of new sins, either in distrusting God's mercy towards himself, or in murmuring at God's patience towards them, or perchance in being uncharitably offended with them, and expressing it with some bitterness, but that in respect of himself, and not of God's glory only, this *Discedite*, Depart from me all such men as do sin in yourselves, and may make me sin too, was an act of an heavenly courage, and a thankful testimony of God's gracious visiting his soul, enabling him so resolutely to tear himself from such persons, as might lead him into tentation.

Neither is this separation of David, and his company, partial; he does not banish those that incline him to one sin, a sin that perchance he is a weary of, or grown unable to proceed in, and retained them that concur with him in some fresh sin, to which he hath a new appetite. David doth not banish them that sucked his subjects' blood, or their money, and retained them that solicit, and corrupt their wives, and daughters; he doth not displace them, who served the vices of his predecessor, and supply those places with instruments of new vices of his own, but it is *Discedite omnes, Depart all ye workers of iniquity*. Now beloved, when God begins so high as in kings, he makes this

[10] Psalm lxix. 26. [11] Psalm xli. 6. [12] Psalm xli. 5.

duty the easier to thee; to banish from thee, *All the workers of iniquity*. It is not a *Discede*, that will serve to banish one, and retain the rest, nor a *Discedite*, to banish the rest, and retain one, but *Discedite omnes*, *Depart all*, for that sin stays in state, that stays alone, and hath the venom, and the malignity of all the rest contracted in it. It is nothing for a sick man that hath lost his taste, to say, *Discedat gula*, Depart voluptuousness; nothing in a consumption to say, *Discedat luxuria*, Depart wantonness; nothing for a client *in forma pauperis*, to say, *Discedat corruptio*, I will not bribe; but *Discedant omnes*, Depart all, and all together, ye workers of iniquity.

But yet David's general discharge had, and ours must have, a restriction, a limitation; it is not (as St. Jerome notes upon this place) *Omnes qui operati*, but *Omnes operantes*, not all that have wrought iniquity, but all that continue in doing so still. David was not inexorable towards those that had offended; what an example should he have given God against himself, if he had been so? we must not despise, nor defame men, because they have committed some sin. When the mercy of God hath wrought upon their sin in the remission thereof, that leprosy of Naaman cleaves to us, their sin is but transferred to us, if we will not forgive that which God hath forgiven, for it is but *omnes operantes*, all they that continue in their evil ways. All these must depart: how far? first, they must be avoided, *Declinate*, saith St. Paul, *I beseech you brethren, mark them diligently which cause division and offences, and avoid them*[13]. And this corrects our desire in running after such men, as come with their own inventions, schismatical Separatists, *declinate*, avoid them; if he be no such, but amongst ourselves, a brother, but yet a worker of iniquity, *If any one that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, with such a one eat not*[14]. If we cannot starve him out, we must thrust him out; put away from among you, that wicked man. No conversation at all is allowed to us, with such a man, as is obstinate in his sin, and incorrigible; no not to bid him God speed, *For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds*[15]. In this divorce, both the generality, and the distance is

[13] Rom. xvi. 17. [14] 1 Cor. v. 11. [15] 2 John i. 10.

best expressed by Christ himself, *If thine eye, thine hand, thy foot offend thee, amputandi et projiciendi*[16], with what anguish or remorse soever it be done, they must be *cut off*, and being cut off, *cast away;* it is a divorce and no superinduction, it is a separating, and no redintegration. Though thou couldst be content to go to heaven with both eyes, (thyself and thy companion) yet better to go into heaven with one, thyself alone, than to endanger thyself to be left out for thy companion's sake.

To conclude this first part, David does not say, *Discedam*, but *Discedite*, he does not say, that he will depart from them, but he commands them to depart from him. We must not think to depart from the offices of society, and duties of a calling, and hide ourselves in monasteries, or in retired lives, for fear of tentations; but when a tentation attempts us, to come with that authority, and that powerful exorcism of Nazianzen, *Fuge, recede, ne te cruce Christi, ad quam omnia contremiscunt, feriam*, Depart from me, lest the cross of Christ, in my hand, overthrow you. For a sober life, and a Christian mortification, and discreet discipline, are crosses derived from the cross of Christ Jesus, and animated by it, and may be always in a readiness to cross such tentations. In the former descriptions of the manner of our behaviour towards workers of iniquity, there is one *declinate*, one word that implies a withdrawing of ourselves; for that must be done, not out of the world, but out of that ill air; we must not put ourselves in danger, nor in distance of a tentation; but all the other words are words of a more active vehemence, *amputate*, and *projicite;* it is *discedite*, and not *discedam*, a driving away, and not a running away.

We proceed now in our second part, to the reasons of David's confidence, and his openness, and his public declaration; why David was content to be rid of all his company; and it was, because he had better; he says, *The Lord had heard him;* and first, *He had heard, vocem fletus, the voice of his weeping.* Here is an admirable readiness in God, that hears a voice in that, which hath none. They have described God by saying he is all eye, an universal eye, that pierceth into every dark corner; but in dark corners, there is something for him to see; but he is all

[16] Matt. v. 28.

ear too, and hears even the silent, and speechless man, and hears that in that man, that makes no sound, his tears. When Hezekiah wept, he was turned to the wall[17], (perchance, because he would not be seen) and yet God bade the prophet Esay tell him, *Vidi lacrymam;* though the text say, *Hezekiah wept sore*, yet *vidit lacrymam*, God saw every single tear, his first tear, and was affected with that. But yet this is more strange; God heard his tears. And therefore the weeping of a penitent sinner, is not improperly called, *Legatio lacrymarum*[18], an embassage of tears; to ambassadors belongs an audience, and to these embassages God gives a gracious audience; *Abyssus abyssum invocat, One depth calls upon another*[19]; and so doth one kind of tears call upon one another. Tears of sorrow call upon tears of joy, and all call upon God, and bring him to that ready hearing which is implied in the words of this text, *shamang;* a word of that largeness in the Scriptures, that sometimes in the translation of the Septuagint, it signifies hearing, *shamang*, is *audit*, God gives ear to our tears; sometimes it is believing, *shamang*, is *credit*, God gives faith, and credit to our tears; sometimes it is affecting, *shamang*, is *miseretur*, God hath mercy upon us for our tears; sometimes it is affecting, *shamang*, is *respondet*, God answers the petition of our tears; and sometimes it is publication, *shamang*, is *divulgat*, God declares and manifests to others, by his blessings upon us, the pleasure that he takes in our holy and repentant tears. And therefore *Lacrymæ fœnus*, says St. Basil, Tears are that usury, by which the joys of heaven are multiplied unto us; the preventing grace, and the free mercy of God, is our stock, and principal; but the acts of obedience, and mortification, fasting, and praying, and weeping, are *fœnus*, (says that blessed father) the interest, and the increase of our holy joy.

That which we intend in all this, is, that when our heart is well disposed toward God, God sees our prayers, as they are coming in the way, before they have any voice, in our words. When Christ came to Lazarus' house, before Mary had asked anything at his hands, as soon as she had wept, Christ was affected, *He groaned in the spirit, he was troubled*, and *he wept*

[17] Isaiah xxxviii. [18] Gregory. [19] Psalm xliii. 7

too[20]; and he proceeded to the raising of Lazarus, before she asked him; her eyes were his glass, and he saw her desire in her tears. There is a kind of simplicity in tears, which God hearkens to, and believes. *We know not what we should pray for as we ought*[21]. *Quid? nescimus orationem dominicam?* Can we not say the Lord's Prayer, says St. Augustine? Yes, we can say that; but *Nescimus tribulationem prodesse*, says he, We do not know the benefit that is to be made of tribulation, and tentation, *et petimus liberari ab omni malo*, we pray to be delivered from all evil, and we mean all tribulation, and all tentation, as though all they were always evil; but in that there may be much error: the sons of Zebedee prayed, but ambitiously, and were not heard[22]; St. Paul prayed for the taking away of the provocation of the flesh, but inconsiderately, and missed[23]; the apostles made a request, for fire against the Samaritans, but uncharitably, and were reproved[24]. But when Jehoshaphat was come to that perplexity by the Moabites, that he knew not what to do, nor what to say, *Hoc solum residui habemus*, says he, *ut oculos nostros dirigamus ad te*, This we can do, and we need do no more, we can turn our eyes to thee. Now whether he directed those eyes in looking to him, or in weeping to him, God hears the voice of our looks, God hears the voice of our tears, sometimes better than the voice of our words; for it is the *Spirit itself that makes intercession for us*[25], *Gemitibus inenarrabilibus*, In those *groans*, and so in those tears, which we *cannot utter; Ineloquacibus*, as Tertullian reads that place, devout, and simple tears, which cannot speak, speak aloud in the ears of God; nay, tears which we cannot utter; not only not utter the force of the tears, but not utter the very tears themselves. As God sees the water in the spring in the veins of the earth, before it bubble upon the face of the earth; so God sees tears in the heart of a man, before they blubber his face; God hears the tears of that sorrowful soul, which for sorrow cannot shed tears.

From this casting up of the eyes, and pouring out the sorrow of the heart at the eyes, at least opening God a window, through which he may see a wet heart through a dry eye; from these

[20] John xi. [21] Rom. viii. 26. [22] Matt. xx. 22.
[23] 2 Cor. xii. 8. [24] 2 Chron. xx. 12. [25] Rom. viii. 26.

overtures of repentance, which are as those imperfect sounds of words, which parents delight in, in their children, before they speak plain; a penitent sinner comes to a verbal, and a more express prayer. To these prayers, these vocal and verbal prayers from David, God had given ear, and from this hearing of those prayers was David come to this thankful confidence, *The Lord hath heard, the Lord will hear.* Now, beloved, this prayer which David speaks of here, which our first translation calls a *petition*, is very properly rendered in our second translation, a *supplication;* for supplications were *à suppliciis;* supplications amongst the Gentiles were such sacrifices, as were made to the gods, out of confiscations, out of the goods of those men, upon whom the state had inflicted any pecuniary or capital punishment. *Supplicationes, à suppliciis;* and therefore this prayer which David made to God, when his hand was upon him, in that heavy correction, and calamity, which occasioned this Psalm, is truly and properly called a *supplication*, that is, a prayer, or petition, that proceeds from suffering.

And if God have heard his supplication, if God have regarded him then, when he was in his displeasure, if God have turned to him, when he was turned from him, and stroked him with the same hand that struck him, God will much more perfect his own work, and grant his prayer after; if God would endure to look upon him in his deformity, he will delight to look upon him then, when he hath shed the light and the loveliness of his own countenance upon him: it is the apostle's argument, as well as David's, *If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*[26]. When David found, that God had heard his *supplications*, the voice of his suffering, of his punishment, he was sure he would hear his *prayer*, the voice of his thankfulness too.

And this was David's second reason, for his alacrity, and confidence, that God would never be weary of hearing, he had heard him, and he would hear him still, he had heard the *supplication*, and he would hear his *prayer;* for this word, which signifies *prayer* here, is derived from *palal*, which signifies properly *separare:* as his *supplication* was acceptable, which proceeded *à*

[26] Rom. v. 10.

*suppliciis*, from a sense of his afflictions; so this *prayer*, which came *post separationem*, after he had separated, and divorced himself from his former company, after his *discedite*, his discharging of all the workers of iniquity, must necessarily be better accepted at God's hand. He that hears a suppliant, that is, a man in misery, and does some small matter for the present ease of that man, and proceeds no farther, *ipsum quod dedit perit*, that which he gave is lost, it is drowned by that flood of misery that overflows and surrounds that wretched man, he is not the better to-morrow for to-day's alms, *et vitam producit ad miseriam*, that very alms prolongs his miserable life still; without to-day's alms, he should not have had a to-morrow to be miserable in. Now, Christ only is the Samaritan which perfected his cure upon the wounded man: *He saw him*, says the text[27], so did the rest that passed by him; but, *He had compassion on him;* so he might, and yet actually have done him no good; but, *He went to him;* so he might too, and then out of a delicateness or fastidiousness, have gone from him again; but (to contract) he bound up his wounds, he poured in oil and wine, he put him upon his own beast, he brought him to an inn, made provision for him, gave the host money beforehand, gave him charge to have a care of him, and (which is the perfection of all, the greatest testimony of our Samaritan's love to us) he promised to come again, and at that coming, he does not say, *He will pay*, but *He will recompense*, which is a more abundant expressing of his bounty. Christ loves not but in the way of marriage; if he begin to love thee, he tells thee, *Sponsabo te mihi, I will marry thee unto me*[28], and *sponsabo in æternum, I will marry thee for ever*. For it is a marriage that prevents all mistakings, and excludes all impediments, *I will marry thee in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness;* many, and great assurances. And as it is added, *Seminabo te mihi*, which is a strange expressing of God's love to us, *I will sow thee unto me in the earth;* when I have taken thee into my husbandry, thou shalt increase, and multiply, *seminabo te*, and all that thou dost produce, shall be directed upon me, *seminabo te mihi, I will sow thee to myself:* therefore thy soul

[27] Luke x. 33. [28] Hosea ii. 19.

may be bold to join with David in that thankful confidence, *He hath heard my supplication*, and therefore, *he will hear my prayer;* he looked upon me in the dust of the earth, much more will he do so, having now laid me upon carpets; he looked upon me in my sores, sores of mine enemies' malice, and sores of mine own sins, much more will he do so now, when he hath imprinted in me the wounds of his own Son; for those that were so many wounds upon him, are so many stars upon me; He looked upon me, may David say, when I followed the ewes great with young, much more will he do so now, now when by his directions, I lead out his people, great with enterprises, and victories against his enemies. First David comes to that holy nobleness, he dares cast off ill instruments, and is not afraid of conspiracy; he dares divorce himself from dangerous company, and is not afraid of melancholy; he dares love God, and is not afraid of that jealousy, that he is too religious to be employed, too tender conscienced to be put upon business; he dares reprehend them that are under his charge, and is not afraid of a recrimination; he dares observe a Sabbath, he dares startle at a blasphemy, he dares forbear countenancing a profane or a scurril jest with his praise, he dares be an honest man; which holy confidence constituted our first praise, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity;* and then he grounds this confidence upon an undeceivable rock, upon God's seal, *God hath heard me, therefore God will hear me.* And when God hears, God speaks too, and when God speaks, God does too, and therefore I may safely proceed as I do, which was our second consideration. And then the third, which remains, is, that upon this, he returns to the consideration, what that was, that he had done; he had either imprecated, or denounced, at least, heavy judgments upon his enemies; and he finds it avowable, and justifiable to have done so; and therefore persists in it, *Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and sore vexed; let them return, and be ashamed suddenly.*

All clean beasts had both these marks, they divided the hoof, and they chewed the cud: all good resolutions, which pass our prayer, must have these two marks too, they must divide the hoof, they must make a double impression, they must be directed upon God's glory, and upon our good, and they must pass a rumination,

a chewing of the cud, a second examination, whether that prayer were so conditioned or no. We pray sometimes out of sudden and indigested apprehensions; we pray sometimes out of custom, and communion with others; we pray sometimes out of a present sense of pain, or imminent danger; and this prayer may divide the hoof; it may look towards God's glory, and towards our good; but it does not chew the cud too; that is, if I have not considered, not examined, whether it do so or no, it is not a prayer that God will call a sacrifice. You see Christ brought his own prayer, *Si possibile, If it be possible*, &c., through such a rumination, *Veruntamen, Yet not my will*, &c. As many a man swears, and if he be surprised, and asked, What did you say, he does not remember his own oath, not what he swore; so many a man prays, and does not remember his own prayer. As a clock gives a warning before it strikes, and then there remains a sound, and a tinkling of the bell after it hath stricken: so a precedent meditation, and a subsequent rumination, make the prayer a prayer; I must think before, what I will ask, and consider again, what I have asked; and upon this dividing the hoof, and chewing the cud, David avows to his own conscience his whole action, even to this consummation thereof, *Let mine enemies be ashamed*, &c.

Now these words, whether we consider the natural signification of the words, or the authority of those men, who have been expositors upon them, may be understood either way, either to be *imprecatoria*, words of imprecation, that David in the spirit of anguish wishes that these things might fall upon his enemies, or else *prædictoria*, words of prediction, that David in the spirit of prophecy pronounces that these things shall fall upon them.

If they be *imprecatoria*, words spoken out of his wish, and desire, then they have in them the nature of a curse: and because Lyra takes them to be so, a curse, he refers the words *Ad dæmones*, To the devil: that herein David seconds God's malediction upon the serpent, and curses the devil, as the occasioner and first mover of all these calamities; and says of them, *Let all our enemies be ashamed, and sore vexed*, &c. Others refer these words to the first Christian times, and the persecutions then, and so to be a malediction, a curse upon the Jews, and upon the Romans

who persecuted the primitive church then, *Let them be ashamed*, &c. And then Gregory Nyssen refers these words to more domestical and intrinsic enemies, to David's own concupiscences, and the rebellions of his own lusts, *Let those enemies be ashamed*, &c. For all those who understand these words to be a curse, a malediction, are loath to admit that David did curse his enemies, merely out of a respect of those calamities which they had inflicted upon him. And that is a safe ground; no man may curse another, in contemplation of himself only, if only himself be concerned in the case. And when it concerns the glory of God, our imprecations, our maledictions upon the persons, must not have their principal relation, as to God's enemies, but as to God's glory; our end must be, that God may have his glory, not that they may have their punishment. And therefore how vehement soever David seem in this imprecation, and though he be more vehement in another place, *Let them be confounded, and troubled for ever, yea, let them be put to shame, and perish*[89], yet that perishing is but a perishing of their purposes, let their plots perish, let their malignity against thy church be frustrated; for so he expresses himself in the verse immediately before, *Fill their faces with shame;* but why? and how? *That they may seek thy name, O Lord;* that was David's end, even in the curse; David wishes them no ill, but for their good; no worse to God's enemies, but that they might become his friends. The rule is good, which out of his moderation St. Augustine gives, that in all inquisitions, and executions in matters of religion, (when it is merely for religion without sedition) *Sint qui pœniteant*, Let the men remain alive, or else how can they repent? So in all imprecations, in all hard wishes, even upon God's enemies, *Sint qui convertantur*, Let the men remain, that they may be capable of conversion; wish them not so ill, as that God can show no mercy to them; for so the ill wish falls upon God himself, if it preclude his way of mercy upon that ill man. In no case must the curse be directed upon the person; for when in the next Psalm to this, David seems passionate, when he asks that of God there, which he desires God to forbear in the beginning of this Psalm, when his *Ne arguas in ira, O Lord rebuke not in thine anger*, is

[89] Psalm lxxxiii. 17.

turned to a *Surge Domine in ira, Arise O Lord in thine anger;* St. Augustine begins to wonder, *Quid? illum, quem perfectum dicimus, ad iram provocat Deum?* Would David provoke God, who is all sweetness, and mildness, to anger against any man! No, not against any man; but *Diaboli possessio peccator*, Every sinner is a slave to his beloved sin; and therefore, *Misericors orat, adversus eum, quicunque orat*, How bitterly soever I curse that sin, yet I pray for that sinner. David would have God angry with the tyrant, not with the slave that is oppressed; with the sin, not with the soul that is enthralled to it. And so, as the words may be a curse, a malediction in David's mouth, we may take them into our mouth too, and say, *Let those enemies be ashamed*, &c.

If this then were an imprecation, a malediction, yet it was medicinal, and had *rationem boni*, a charitable tincture, and nature in it; he wished the men no harm, as men. But it is rather *prædictorium*, a prophetical vehemence, that if they will take no knowledge of God's declaring himself in the protection of his servants, if they would not consider that God had heard, and would hear, had rescued, and would rescue his children, but would continue their opposition against him, heavy judgments would certainly fall upon them; their punishment should be certain, but the effect should be uncertain; for God only knows, whether his correction shall work upon his enemies, to their mollifying, or to their obduration. Those bitter, and weighty imprecations which David hath heaped together against Judas, seem to be direct imprecations[30]; and yet St. Peter himself calls them prophecies; *Oportet impleri Scripturam; They were done* says he, *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*[31]; not that David in his own heart did wish all that upon Judas; but only so, as foreseeing in the spirit of prophesying, that those things should fall upon him, he concurred with the purpose of God therein, and so far as he saw it to be the will of God, he made it his will, and his wish. And so have all those judgments, which we denounce upon sinners, the nature of prophecies in them; when we read in the church, that commination, *Cursed is the idolator*, this may fall upon some of our own kindred; and *Cursed is he that curseth*

[30] Psal. cix. [31] Acts i. 16.

*father or mother*, this may fall upon some of our own children: and *Cursed is he that perverteth judgment*, this may fall upon some powerful persons, that we may have a dependance upon; and upon these we do not wish that God's vengeance should fall; yet we prophesy, and denounce justly, that upon such, such vengeances will fall; and then, all prophecies of that kind are always conditional; they are conditional, if we consider any decree in God; they must be conditional in all our denunciations; if you repent, they shall not fall upon you, if not, *Oportet impleri Scripturam, The Scripture must be fulfilled;* we do not wish them, we do but prophesy them; no, nor we do not prophesy them; but the Scriptures have pre-prophesied them before; they will fall upon you, as upon Judas, in condemnation, and perchance, as upon Judas, in desperation too.

David's purpose then being in these words to work to their amendment, and not their final destruction, we may easily and usefully discern in the particular words, a milder sense than the words seem at first to present. And first give me leave by the way, only in passing, by occasion of those words which are here rendered, *Convertentur, et erubescent*, and which in the original are *jashabu*, and *jeboshu*, which have a musical, and harmonious sound, and agnomination in them, let me note thus much, even in that, that the Holy Ghost in penning the Scriptures delights himself, not only with a propriety, but with a delicacy, and harmony, and melody of language; with height of metaphors, and other figures, which may work greater impressions upon the readers, and not with barbarous, or trivial, or market, or homely language: it is true, that when the Grecians, and the Romans, and St. Augustine himself, undervalued and despised the Scriptures, because of the poor and beggarly phrase, that they seemed to be written in, the Christians could say little against it, but turned still upon the other safer way, we consider the matter, and not the phrase, because for the most part, they had read the Scriptures only in translations, which could not maintain the majesty, nor preserve the elegancies of the original.

Their case was somewhat like ours, at the beginning of the Reformation; when, because most of those men who laboured in that Reformation, came out of the Roman church, and there had

never read the body of the fathers at large; but only such rags and fragments of those fathers, as were patched together in their decretats, and decretals, and other such common placers, for their purpose, and to serve their turn, therefore they were loath at first to come to that issue, to try controversies by the fathers. But as soon as our men that embraced the Reformation, had had time to read the fathers, they were ready enough to join with the adversary in that issue: and still we protest, that we accept that evidence, the testimony of the fathers, and refuse nothing, which the fathers unanimously delivered, for matter of faith; and howsoever at the beginning some men were a little umbrageous, and startling at the name of the fathers, yet since the fathers have been well studied for more than threescore years, we have behaved ourselves with more reverence towards the fathers, and more confidence in the fathers, than they of the Roman persuasion have done, and been less apt to suspect or quarrel their books, or to reprove their doctrines, than our adversaries have been. So, howsoever the Christians at first were fain to sink a little under that imputation, that their Scriptures have no majesty, no eloquence, because these embellishments could not appear in translations, nor they then read originals, yet now, that a perfect knowledge of those languages hath brought us to see the beauty and the glory of those books, we are able to reply to them, that there are not in all the world so eloquent books as the Scriptures; and that nothing is more demonstrable, than that if we would take all those figures, and tropes, which are collected out of secular poets, and orators, we may give higher, and livelier examples, of every one of those figures, out of the Scriptures, than out of all the Greek and Latin poets, and orators; and they mistake it much, that think, that the Holy Ghost hath rather chosen a low, and barbarous, and homely style, than an eloquent, and powerful manner of expressing himself.

To return and to cast a glance upon these words in David's prediction, upon his enemies, what hardness is in the first, *Erubescent, Let them be ashamed:* for the word imports no more, our last translation says no more, neither did our first translators intend any more, by their word, *Confounded;* for that is, confounded with shame in themselves. This is *Virga disciplinæ,*

says St. Bernard; as long as we are ashamed of sin, we are not grown up, and hardened in it; we are under correction; the correction of a remorse. As soon as Adam came to be ashamed of his nakedness, he presently thought of some remedy; if one should come and tell thee, that he looked through the door, that he stood in a window over against thine, and saw thee do such or such a sin, this would put thee to a shame, and thou wouldst not do that sin, till thou wert sure he could not see thee. O, if thou wouldst not sin, till thou couldst think that God saw thee not, this shame had wrought well upon thee. There are complexions that cannot blush; there grows a blackness, a sootiness upon the soul, by custom in sin, which overcomes all blushing, all tenderness. White alone is paleness, and God loves not a pale soul, a soul possessed with a horror, affrighted with a diffidence, and distrusting his mercy. Redness alone is anger, and vehemency, and distemper, and God loves not such a red soul, a soul that sweats in sin, that quarrels for sin, that revenges in sin. But that whiteness that preserves itself, not only from being dyed all over in any foul colour, from contracting the name of any habitual sin, and so to be called such or such a sinner, but from taking any spot, from coming within distance of a temptation, or of a suspicion, is that whiteness, which God means, when he says, *Thou art all fair my love, and there is no spot in thee*[32]. Indifferent looking, equal and easy conversation, appliableness to wanton discourses, and notions, and motions, are the devil's single money, and many pieces of these make up an adultery. As light a thing as a spangle is, a spangle is silver; and leaf-gold, that is blown away, is gold; and sand that hath no strength, no coherence, yet knits the building; so do approaches to sin, become sin, and fixed sin. To avoid these spots, is that whiteness that God loves in the soul. But there is a redness that God loves too; which is this erubescence that we speak of; an aptness in the soul to blush, when any of these spots do fall upon it.

God is the universal confessor, the general penitentiary of all the world, and all die in the guilt of their sin, that go not to confession to him. And there are sins of such weight to the soul, and such entangling, and perplexity to the conscience, in

[32] Cant. iv. 7.

some circumstances of the sin, as that certainly a soul may receive much ease in such cases, by confessing itself to man. In this holy shamefastness, which we intend in this outward blushing of the face, the soul goes to confession too. And it is one of the principal arguments against confessions by letter, (which some went about to set up in the Roman church) that that took away one of the greatest evidences, and testimonies of their repentance which is this erubescence, this blushing, this shame after sin; if they should not be put to speak it face to face, but to write it, that would remove the shame, which is a part of the repentance. But that soul that goes not to confession to itself, that hath not an internal blushing after a sin committed, is a pale soul, even in the paleness of death, and senselessness, and a red soul, red in the defiance of God. And that whiteness, to avoid approaches to sin, and that redness, to blush upon a sin, which does attempt us, is the complexion of the soul, which God loves, and which the Holy Ghost testifies, when he says, *My beloved is white and ruddy*[33]. And when these men that David speaks of here, had lost that whiteness, their innocency, for David to wish that they might come to a redness, a shame, a blushing, a remorse, a sense of sin, may have been no such great malediction, or imprecation in the mouth of David, but that a man may wish it to his best friend, which should be his soul, and say, *Erubescam*, not let mine enemies, but let me be ashamed with such a shame.

In the second word, *Let them be sore vexed*, he wishes his enemies no worse than himself had been: for he had used the same word of himself before, *Ossa turbata*, *My bones are vexed*, and *Anima turbata*, *My soul is vexed*[34]; and considering, that David had found this vexation to be his way to God, it was no malicious imprecation, to wish that enemy the same physic that he had taken, who was more sick of the same disease than he was. For this is like a troubled sea after a tempest; the danger is past, but yet the billow is great still: the danger was in the calm, in the security, or in the tempest, by mis-interpreting God's corrections to our obduration, and to a remorseless stupefaction; but when a man is come to this holy vexation, to be troubled, to be shaken with a sense of the indignation of God, the storm is past, and the

[33] Cant. v. 10. [34] Psalm vi. 2, 3.

indignation of God is blown over. That soul is in a fair and near way, of being restored to a calmness, and to reposed security of conscience, that is come to this holy vexation.

In a flat map, there goes no more, to make west east, though they be distant in an extremity, but to paste that flat map upon a round body, and then west and east are all one. In a flat soul, in a dejected conscience, in a troubled spirit, there goes no more to the making of that trouble, peace, than to apply that trouble to the body of the merits, to the body of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and conform thee to him, and thy West is East, thy trouble of spirit is tranquillity of spirit. The name of Christ is *Oriens, the East*[35]; and yet Lucifer himself is called *Filius Orientis, the Son of the East*[36]. If thou beest fallen by Lucifer, fallen to Lucifer, and not fallen as Lucifer, to a senselessness of thy fall, and an impenitibleness therein, but to a troubled spirit, still thy prospect is the East, still thy climate is heaven, still thy haven is Jerusalem: for, in our lowest dejection of all, even in the dust of the grave, we are so composed, so laid down, as that we look to the East; if I could believe that Trajan, or Tecla, could look east-ward, that is, towards Christ, in hell, I could believe with them of Rome, that Trajan and Tecla were redeemed by prayer out of hell. God had accepted sacrifices before; but no sacrifice is called *Odor quietis*, It is not said, *That God smelt a savour of rest*[37], in any sacrifice, but that which Noah offered, after he had been variously tossed and tumbled, in the long hulling of the ark upon the waters. A troublesome spirit, and a quiet spirit, are far asunder; but a troubled spirit, and a quiet spirit, are near neighbours. And therefore David means them no great harm, when he says, *Let them be troubled;* for, let the wind be as high as it will, so I sail before the wind, let the trouble of my soul be as great as it will, so it direct me upon God, and I have calm enough.

And this peace, this calm is implied in the next word, *Convertantur*, which is not, *Let them be overthrown*, but *Let them return*, let them be forced to return; he prays, that God would do something to cross their purposes; because as they are against God, so

[35] Zach. vi. 12. [36] Isaiah xiv. 12. [37] Gen. viii. 21.

they are against their own souls. In that way where they are, he sees there is no remedy; and therefore he desires that they might be *turned* into another way; what is that way? This. *Turn us O Lord, and we shall be turned;* that is, turned the right way; towards God. And as there was a promise from God, to hear his people, not only when they came to him in the Temple, but when they turned towards that Temple, in what distance soever they were, so it is always accompanied with a blessing, occasionally to turn towards God; but this prayer, *Turn us, that we may be turned*, is, that we may be, that is, remain turned, that we may continue fixed in that posture. Lot's wife turned herself, and remained an everlasting monument of God's anger; God so turn us always into right ways, as that we be not able to turn ourselves out of them. For God hath *Viam rectam, et bonam*, as himself speaks in the prophet, A right way, and then a good way, which yet is not the right way, that is, not the way which God of himself would go. For his right way is, that we should still keep in his way; his good way is, to beat us into his right way again, by his medicinal corrections, when we put ourselves out of his right way. And that, and that only David wishes, and we wish, that you may *turn*, and *be turned;* stand in that holy posture, all the year, all the years of your lives, that your Christmas may be as holy as your Easter, even your recreations as innocent as your devotions, and every room in the house as free from profaneness as the sanctuary. And this he ends as he begun, with another *erubescant*, let them be ashamed, and that *valde velociter, suddenly:* for David saw, that if a sinner came not to a shame of sin quickly, he would quickly come to a shamelessness, to an impudence, to a searedness, to an obduration in it.

Now beloved, this is the worst curse that comes out of a holy man's mouth, even towards his enemy, that God would correct him to his amendment. And this is the worst harm that we mean to you, when we denounce the judgments of God against sin and sinners, *ut erubescatis*, that we might see blood in your faces, the blood of your Saviour working in that shame for sin. That that question of the prophet might not confound you, *Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? Nay, they were*

*not ashamed*[35]; *Erubescere nesciebant*, They were never used to shame, they knew not how to be ashamed. *Therefore*, says he, *they shall fall amongst them that fall*, they shall do as the world does, sin as their neighbours sin, and fall as they fall, irrepentantly here, and hereafter irrecoverably. And then, *ut conturbati sitis*, that you may be troubled in your hearts, and not cry peace, peace, where there is no peace, and flatter yourselves, because you are in a true religion, and in the right way; for a child may drown in a font, and a man may be poisoned in the sacrament; much more perish, though in a true church. And also *Ut revertamini*, That you may return again to the Lord, return to that state of pureness, which God gave you in baptism, to that state which God gave you the last time you received his body and blood so as became you. And then lastly, *Ut erubescatis velociter*, That you may come to the beginning of this, and to all this quickly, and not to defer it, because God defers the judgment. For to end this with St. Augustine's words, upon this word *velociter*, *Quandocunque venit, celerrime venit, quod desperatur esse venturum:* How late soever it come, that comes quickly, if it come at all, which we believed would never come. How long soever it be, before that judgment come, yet it comes quickly, if it come before thou look for it, or be ready for it. Whosoever labours to sleep out the thought of that day, *His damnation sleepeth not*, says the apostle. It is not only, that his damnation is not dead, that there shall never be any such day, but that it is no day asleep: every midnight shall be a day of judgment to him, and keep him awake; and when consternation, and lassitude lend him, or counterfeit to him a sleep, as St. Basil says of the righteous, *Etiam somnia justorum preces sunt*, That even their dreams are prayers, so this incorrigible sinner's dreams shall be, not only presages of his future, but acts of his present condemnation.

[35] Jer. vi. 15.

# SERMON LIV.

## *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

### Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.

**Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.**

This that I have read to you, can scarce be called all the text; I proposed for the text, the first and second verses, and there belongs more to the first, than I have delivered in it; for, in all those translators, and expositors, who apply themselves exactly to the original, to the Hebrew, the title of the Psalm, is part of the first verse of the Psalm. St. Augustine gives somewhat a strange reason, why the Book of Enoch, cited by St. Jude in his Epistle, and some other such ancient books as that, were never received into the body of canonical Scriptures, *Ut in authoritate apud nos non essent, nimia fecit eorum antiquitas*, The church suspected them, because they were too ancient, says St. Augustine. But that reason alone, is so far from being enough to exclude anything from being part of the Scriptures, as that we make it justly an argument, for the receiving the titles of the Psalms into the body of canonical Scriptures, that they are as ancient as the Psalms themselves. So then the title of this Psalm enters into our text, as a part of the first verse. And the title is *Davidis Erudiens;* where we need not insert (as our translators in all languages and editions have conceived a necessity to do) any word, for the clearing of the text, more than is in the text itself, (and therefore Tremellius hath inserted that word, *An Ode of David*, we, *A Psalm of David*, others, others) for the words themselves yield a perfect sense in themselves, *Le David Maschil*, is *Davidis Erudiens*, that is, *Davidis Eruditio*, David's Institution, David's catechism; and so our text, which is the first and second verse, taking in all the first verse, in all accounts, is now David's catechism; *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven*, &c.

In these words, our parts shall be these; first, that so great a master as David, proceeded by way of catechism, of instruction in fundamental things, and doctrines of edification. Secondly, That the foundation of this building, the first lesson in this art, the first letter in this alphabet, is *blessedness;* for, *Primus actus voluntatis est amor;* Man is not man, till he have produced some acts of the faculties of that soul, that makes him man; till he understand something, and will something, till he know, and till he would have something, he is no man; now, the first act of the will is love; and no man can love anything, but in the likeness, and in the notion of *happiness*, of *blessedness*, or of some degree thereof; and therefore David proposes that for the foundation of his catechism, *blessedness;* the catechism of David, *Blessed is the man.* But then, in a third consideration, we lay hold upon St. Augustine's aphorism, *Amare nisi nota non possumus*, We cannot truly love anything, but that we know; and therefore David being to proceed catechistically, and for instruction, proposes this *blessedness*, which as it is in heaven, and reserved for our possession there, is in-intelligible (as Tertullian speaks) inconceivable, he purposes it in such notions, and by such lights, as may enable us to see it, and know it in this life. And those lights are in this text, three; for, *The forgiveness of transgressions*, and then, *The covering of sins*, and lastly, *The not imputing of iniquity*, which three David proposes here, are not a threefold repeating of one and the same thing; but this blessedness consisting in our reconciliation to God, (for we were created in a state of friendship with God, our rebellion put us into a state of hostility, and now we need a reconciliation, because we are not able to maintain a war against God, no, nor against any other enemy of man, without God) this blessedness David doth not deliver us all at once, in three expressings of the same thing, but he gives us one light thereof, in the knowledge that there is a forgiving of transgressions, another, in the covering of sins, and a third, in the not imputing of iniquity. But then, (that which will constitute a fourth consideration) when God hath presented himself, and offered his peace, in all these, there is also something to be done on our part; for though the forgiving of transgression, the covering of sin, the not imputing of iniquity, pro-

ceed only from God, yet God affords these to none but him, *In whose spirit there is no guile.* And so you have all that belongs to the master, and his manner of teaching, David catechising; and all that belongs to the doctrine and the catechism, *blessedness*, that is reconciliation to God, notified in those three acts of his mercy; and all that belongs to the disciple, that is to be catechised, a docile, an humble, a sincere heart, *In whose spirit there is no guile;* and to these particulars, in their order thus proposed, we shall now pass.

That then which constitutes our first part, is this, that David, than whom this world never had a greater master for the next, amongst the sons of men, delivers himself, by way of catechising, of fundamental and easy teaching. As we say justly, and confidently, That of all rhetorical and poetical figures, that fall into any art, we are able to produce higher strains, and livelier examples, out of the Scriptures, than out of all the orators, and poets in the world, yet we read not, we preach not the Scriptures for that use, to magnify their eloquence; so in David's Psalms we find abundant impressions, and testimonies of his knowledge in all arts, and all kinds of learning, but that is not it which he proposes to us. David's last words are, and in that David's holy glory was placed, that he was not only *the sweet Psalmist*[1], that he had an harmonious, a melodious, a charming, a powerful way of entering into the soul, and working upon the affections of men, but he was *the sweet Psalmist of Israel*, he employed his faculties for the conveying of the God of Israel, into the Israel of God; *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*[2]; not the spirit of rhetoric, nor the spirit of poetry, nor the spirit of mathematics, and demonstration, but, *The Spirit of the Lord, the Rock of Israel spake by me*, says he; he boasts not that he had delivered himself in strong, or deep, or mysterious arts, that was not his rock; but his rock was the rock of Israel, his way was to establish the church of God upon fundamental doctrines. *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, says Stephen[3]. Likely to be so, because being adopted by the king's daughter, he had an extraordinary education; and likely

[1] 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. [2] 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. [3] Acts vii. 22.

also, because he brought so good natural faculties, for his masters to work upon, *Ut reminisci potius videretur, quam discere*[4], That whatsoever any master proposed unto him, he rather seemed to remember it then, than to learn it but then; and yet in Moses' Books, we meet no great testimonies, or deep impressions of these learnings in Moses: he had (as St. Ambrose notes well) more occasions to speak of natural philosophy, in the creation of the world, and of the more secret, and reserved, and remote corners of nature, in those counterfeitings of miracles in Pharaoh's court, than he hath laid hold of. So Nebuchadnezzar appointed his officers, that they should furnish his court with some young gentlemen, of good blood and families of the Jews; and (as it is added there[5]) *well-favoured youths, in whom there was no blemish, skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science;* and then farther, *To be taught the tongue, and the learning of the Chaldeans.* And Daniel was one of these, and, no doubt, a great proficient in all these; and yet Daniel seems not to make any great show of these learnings in his writings. St. Paul was in a higher pædagogy, and another manner of university than all this; *Caught up into the third heavens, into Paradise,* as he says[6]; and there he learnt much; but (as he says too) *such things as it was not lawful to utter;* that is, it fell not within the laws of preaching to publish them. So that not only some learning in humanity, (as in Moses' and Daniel's case) but some points of divinity, (as in St. Paul's case) may be unfit to be preached. Not that a divine should be ignorant of either; either ornaments of human, or mysteries of divine knowledge. For, says St. Augustine, Every man that comes from Egypt, must bring some of the Egyptian's goods with him. *Quanto auro exivit suffarcinatus Cyprianus,* says he, How much of the Egyptian gold and goods brought Cyprian, and Lactantius, and Optatus, and Hilary out of Egypt? That is, what a treasure of learning, gathered when they were of the Gentiles, brought they from thence, to the advancing of Christianity, when they applied themselves to it? St. Augustine confesses, that the reading of Cicero's Hortensius, *Mutavit affectum meum*[7], began in him a con-

[4] Philo. [5] Dan. i. 4.
[6] 2 Cor. xii. 2. [7] Lib. 3. c. 4.

version from the world, *Et ad teipsum, Domine, mutavit preces meas*, That book, says he, converted me to more fervent prayers to thee, my God; *Et surgere jam cœperam ut ad te redirem*, By that help I rose, and came towards thee. And so Justin Martyr had his initiation, and beginning of his conversion, from reading some passages in Plato. St. Basil expresses it well; They that will die a perfect colour, dip it in some less perfect colour before. To be a good divine, requires human knowledge; and so does it of all the mysteries of divinity too; because, as there are devils that will not be cast out but by fasting and prayer, so there are humours that undervalue men, that lack these helps. But our congregations are not made of such persons; not of mere natural men, that must be converted out of Aristotle, and by Cicero's words, nor of Arians that require new proofs for the Trinity, nor Pelagians that must be pressed with new discoveries of God's predestination; but persons embracing, with a thankful acquiescence therein, doctrines necessary for the salvation of their souls in the world to come, and the exaltation of their devotion in this. This way David calls his, a catechism. And let not the greatest doctor think it unworthy of him to catechise thus, nor the learnedest hearer to be thus catechised; Christ enwraps the greatest doctors in his person, and in his practice, when he says, *Sinite parvulos, Suffer little children to come unto me;* and we do not suffer them to come unto us, if when they come, we do not speak to their understanding, and to their edification, for that is but an absent presence, when they hear, and profit not; and Christ enwraps the learnedest hearers, in the persons of his own disciples, when he says, *Except ye become as these little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;* except you nourish yourselves with catechistical, and fundamental doctrines, you are not in a wholesome diet. Now in this catechism, the first stone that David lays, (and that that supports all) the first object that David presents, (and that that directs to all) is blessedness; David's catechism; *Blessed is the man.*

Philosophers could never bring us to the knowledge, what this *summum bonum*, this happiness, this blessedness was. For they considered only some particular fruits thereof; and it is much easier, how high soever a tree be, to come to a taste of some of

the fruits, than to dig to the root of that tree: they satisfied themselves with a little taste of health, and pleasure, and riches, and honour, and never considered that all these must have their root in heaven, and must have a relation to Christ Jesus, who is the root of all. And as these philosophers could never tell us, what this blessedness was, so divines themselves, and those who are best exercised in the language of the Holy Ghost, the original tongue of this text, cannot give us a clear grammatical understanding, of this first word, in which David expresses this blessedness, *ashrei*, which is here translated, *blessed*. They cannot tell, whether it be an adverb, (and then it is *Bene viro*, Well is it for that man, a pathetic, a vehement acclamation, happily, blessedly is that man provided for) or whether it be a plural noun, (and then it is *Beatitudines*, such a blessedness as includes many, all blessednesses in it) and one of these two it must necessarily be in the rules of their construction; that either David enters with an admiration, O how happily is that man provided for! Or with a protestation, that there is no particular blessedness, which that man wants, that hath this, this reconciliation to God.

Eusebius observes out of Plato, that he enjoined the poets, and the writers in his state, to describe no man to be happy, but the good men; none to be miserable, but the wicked. And his scholar Aristotle enters into his book of ethics, and moral doctrine, with that contemplation first of all, that every man hath naturally a disposition to affect, and desire happiness. David who is elder than they, begins his Book of Psalms so; the first word of the first Psalm, is the first word of this text, *Blessed is the man*. He comprehends all that belongs to man's knowledge, and all that belongs to man's practice, in those two, first in understanding true blessedness, and then, in praising God for it: David's *alpha* is *Beatus vir*, O the blessedness of righteous men! And David's *omega* is *Laudate Dominum*, O that men would therefore bless the Lord! And therefore, as he begins this book with God's blessing of man, so he ends it with man's praising of God: for, where the last stroke upon this psaltery, the last verse of the last Psalm, is, *Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord*, yet he adds one note more to us in particular, *Praise ye the Lord;* and there is the end of all. And so also our Saviour

Christ himself, in his own preaching, observed that method; he begun his great sermon in the Mount with that, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are the pure in heart;* blessedness alone was an abundant recompense for all. And so the subject of John Baptist's commission before, and of his disciples' commission after, was still the same, to preach this blessedness, *That the kingdom of God*, that is, reconciliation to God in his visible church, *was at hand*, was forthwith to be established amongst them.

Though then the consummation of this blessedness be that *visio Dei*, that sight of God, which in our glorified state we shall have in heaven, yet, because there is an incohation thereof in this world, which is that which we call reconciliation, it behoves us to consider the disposition requisite for that. It is a lamentable perverseness in us, that we are so contentiously busy, in inquiring into the nature, and essence, and attributes of God, things which are reserved to our end, when we shall know at once, and without study, all that, of which all our lives' study can teach us nothing; and that here, where we are upon the way, we are so negligent and lazy, in inquiring of things, which belong to the way. Those things we learn in no school so well as in adversity. As the body of man, and consequently health, is best understood, and best advanced by dissections, and anatomies, when the hand and knife of the surgeon hath passed upon every part of the body, and laid it open: so when the hand and sword of God hath pierced our soul, we are brought to a better knowledge of ourselves, than any degree of prosperity would have raised us to.

All creatures were brought to Adam, and, because he understood the natures of all those creatures, he gave them names accordingly. In that he gave no name to himself, it may be by some perhaps argued, that he understood himself less than he did other creatures. If Adam be our example, in the time and school of nature, how hard a thing the knowledge of ourselves is, till we feel the direction of adversity, .David is also another example in the time of the law, who first said *in his prosperity, he should never be moved*[s]; but, *when*, says he, *thou hidest thy face*

[s] Psalm xxx. 6.

*from me, I was troubled, and then I cried unto thee O Lord, and I prayed unto my God;* then, but not till then. The same art, the same grammar lasts still; and Peter is an example of the same rule, in the time of grace, who was at first so confident, as to come to that, *si omnes scandalizati*, if all forsook him, *si mori oportuit*, if he must die with him, or die for him, he was ready, and yet without any terror from an armed magistrate, without any surprisal of a subtle examiner, upon the question of a poor maid, he denied his master: but then, the bitterness of his soul taught him another temper, and moderation; when Christ asked him after, *Amas me?* Lovest thou me? not to pronounce upon an infallible confidence, I have loved, and I do, and I will do till death, but, *Domine tu scis, Lord thou knowest that I love thee;* my love to thee is but the effect of thy love to me, and therefore Lord continue thine, that mine may continue. No study is so necessary as to know ourselves; no schoolmaster is so diligent, so vigilant, so assiduous, as adversity: and the end of knowing ourselves, is to know how we are disposed for that which is our end, that is this blessedness; which, though it be well collected and summed by St. Augustine, *Beatis qui habet quicquid vult, et nihil mali vult*, He only is blessed, that desires nothing but that which is good for him, and hath all that, we must pursue, in those particulars, which here, in David's catechism, constitute this blessedness, and constitute our third part, and are delivered in three branches, first, *The forgiving of our transgressions*, and then, *The covering of our sins*, and thirdly, *The not imputing of our iniquities.*

First then, that in this third part, we may see in the first branch, the first notification of this blessedness, we consider the two terms, in which it is expressed, what this is, which is translated *transgression*, and then what this *forgiving* imports. The original word is *pashang*, and that signifies sin in all extensions, the highest, the deepest, the weightiest sin; it is a malicious, and a forcible opposition to God: it is when this Herod, and this Pilate (this body, and this soul of ours) are made friends and agreed, that they may concur to the crucifying of Christ. When not only the members of our bodies, but the faculties of our soul, our will and understanding are bent upon sin: when we do not

only sin strongly, and hungerly, and thirstily, (which appertain to the body) but we sin rationally, we find reasons, (and those reasons, even in God's long patience) why we should sin: we sin wittily, we invent new sins, and we think it an ignorant, a dull, and an unsociable thing, not to sin; yea we sin wisely, and make our sin our way to preferment. Then is this word used by the Holy Ghost, when he expresses both the vehemence, and the weight, and the largeness, and the continuance, all extensions, all dimensions of the sins of Damascus; *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn to it, because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron*[9]; so then, we consider sin here, not as a stain, such as original sin may be, nor as a wound, such as every actual sin may be, but as a burden, a complication, a packing up of many sins, in an habitual practice thereof. This is that weight that sunk the whole world under water, in the first flood, and shall press down the fire itself, to consume it a second time. It is a weight that stupifies and benumbs him that bears it, so, as that the sinner feels not the oppression of his own sins; *Et quid miserius misero non miserante seipsum*[10]? What misery can be greater, than when a miserable man hath not sense to commiserate his own misery! Our first errors are out of levity, and St. Augustine hath taught us a proper ballast and weight for that, *Amor Dei pondus animæ*, The love of God would carry us evenly, and steadily, if we would embark that: but as in great tradings, they come to ballast with merchandise, ballast, and freight is all one; so in this habitual sinner, all is sin, plots and preparations before the act, gladness and glory in the act, sometimes disguises, sometimes justifications after the act, make up one body, one freight of sin. So then *transgression* in this place, in the natural signification of the word, is a weight, a burden, and carrying it, as the word requires, to the greatest extension, it is the sin of the whole world; and that sin is *forgiven*, which is the second term.

The prophet does not say here, *Blessed is that man that hath no transgression*, for that were to say, Blessed is that man that is no man. All people, all nations, did ever in nature acknowledge not only a guiltiness of sin, but some means of reconciliation to

[9] Amos i. 3. [10] Augustine.

their gods in the remission of sins: for they had all some formal, and ceremonial sacrifices, and expiations, and lustrations, by which they thought their sins to be purged, and washed away. Whosoever acknowledges a God, acknowledges a remission of sins, and whosover acknowledges a remission of sins, acknowledges a God. And therefore in this first place, David does not mention God at all; he does not say, *Blessed is he whose transgression the Lord hath forgiven;* for he presumes it to be an impossible tentation to take hold of any man, that there can be any remission of sin, from any other person, or by any other means than from and by God himself; and therefore remission of sins includes an act of God; but what kind of act, is more particularly designed in the original word which is *nasa*, than our word, *forgiving*, reaches to; for the word does not only signify *auferre*, but *ferre;* not only to take away sin, by way of pardon, but to take the sin upon himself, and so to bear the sin, and the punishment of the sin, in his own person. And so Christ is the Lamb of God, *Qui tollit*, not only that *takes away*, but that *takes upon himself*, the sins of the world. *Tulit, portavit, Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*[11]; those griefs, those sorrows which we should, he hath borne, and carried in his own person. So that, as it is all one, never to have come in debt, and to have discharged the debt; so the whole world, all mankind, considered in Christ, is as innocent as if Adam had never sinned. And so this is the first beam of blessedness that shines upon my soul, that I believe that the justice of God is fully satisfied in the death of Christ, and that there is enough given, and accepted in the treasure of his blood, for the remission of all transgressions. And then the second beam of this blessedness, is in *the covering of sins.*

Now to benefit ourselves by this part of David's catechism, we must (as we did before) consider the two terms, of which this part of this blessedness consists, *sin*, and *covering*. *Sin* in this place is not so heavy a word, as *transgression* was in the former; for that was sin in all extensions, sin in all forms, all sin of all men, of all times, of all places, the sin of all the world upon the shoulders of the Saviour of the world. In this place, (the word

[11] Isaiah liii. 4.

is *catah*, and by the derivation thereof from *nata*, which is to decline, to step aside, or to be withdrawn, and *kut*, which is *filum*, a thread, or a line) that which we call sin here, signifies *transilire lineam*, to depart, or by any tentation to be withdrawn from the direct duties, and the exact straightness which is required of us in this world, for the attaining of the next: so that the word imports sins of infirmity, such sins as do fall upon God's best servants, such sins as rather induce a confession of our weakness, and an acknowledgment of our continual need of pardon for something passed, and strength against future invasions, than that induce any devastation, or obduration of the conscience, which *transgression*, in the former branch, implied. For so this word, *catah*, hath that signification (as in many other places) there, where it is said, *That there were seven hundred left-handed Benjamites, which would fling stones at a hair's breadth, and not fail*[18]; that is, not miss the mark a hair's breadth. And therefore when this word *catah*, *sin*, is used in Scripture, to express any weighty, heinous, enormous sin, it hath an addition, *Peccatum magnum peccaverunt*[19], says Moses, when the people were become idolators, *These people have sinned a great sin;* otherwise it signifies such sin, as destroys not the foundation, such as in the nature thereof, does not wholly extinguish grace, nor grieve the spirit of God in us. And such *sins* God *covers*, says David here. Now what is his way of covering these sins?

As *sin* in this notion, is not so deep a wound upon God, as *transgression* in the other, so *covering* here extends not so far, as *forgiving* did there. There *forgiving* was a taking away of sin, by taking that away, that Christ should bear all our sins, it was a suffering, a dying, it was a penal part, and a part of God's justice, executed upon his one and only Son; here it is a part of God's mercy, in spreading, and applying the merits and satisfaction of Christ upon all them, whom God by the Holy Ghost hath gathered in the profession of Christ, and so called to the apprehending and embracing of this mantle, this garment, this covering, the righteousness of Christ in the Christian Christ; in which church, and by his visible ordinances therein, the word, and sacraments, God covers, hides, conceals, even from the inquisition

[18] Judges xx. 16. [19] Exod. xxxii. 31.

of his own justice, those smaller sins, which his servants commit, and does not turn them out of his service, for those sins. So the word (the word is *casah*, which we translate *covering*) is used, *A wise man concealeth knowledge*[14]; that is, does not pretend to know so much as indeed he does: so, our merciful God, when he sees us under this mantle, this covering, Christ spread upon his church, conceals his knowledge of our sins, and suffers them not to reflect upon our consciences, in a consternation thereof. So then, as the *forgiving* was *auferre ferendo*, a taking away of sin, by taking all sin upon his own person, so this *covering* is *tegere attingendo*, to cover sin, by coming to it, by applying himself to our sinful consciences, in the means instituted by him in his church: for they have in that language another word, *sacac*, which signifies *tegere obumbrando*, to cover by overshadowing, by refreshing. This is *tegere obumbrando*, to cover by shadowing, when I defend mine eye from the offence of the sun, by interposing my hand between the sun and mine eye, at this distance, afar off: but *tegere attingendo*, is when thus I lay my hand upon mine eye, and cover it close, by that touching. In the knowledge that Christ hath taken all the sins of all the world upon himself, that there is enough done for the salvation of all mankind, I have a shadowing, a refreshing; but because I can have no testimony, that this general redemption belongs to me, who am still a sinner, except there pass some act between God and me, some seal, some investiture, some acquittance of my debts, my sins, therefore this second beam of David's blessedness, in this his catechism, shines upon me in this, that God hath not only sowed and planted herbs, and simples in the world, medicinal for all diseases of the world, but God hath gathered, and prepared those simples, and presented them, so prepared, to me, for my recovery from my disease: God hath not only received a full satisfaction for all sin in Christ, but Christ, in his ordinances in his church, offers me an application of all that for myself, and covers my sin, from the eye of his Father, not only *obumbrando*, as he hath spread himself as a cloud refreshing the whole world, in the value of the satisfaction, but *attingendo*, by coming to me, by spreading himself upon me, as the prophet did upon the dead child, mouth

[14] Prov. xii. 23.

to mouth, hand to hand; in the mouth of his minister, he speaks to me; in the hand of the minister, he delivers himself to me; and so by these visible acts, and seals of my reconciliation, *tegit attingendo*, he covers me by touching me; he touches my conscience, with a sense and remorse of my sins, in his word; and he touches my soul, with a faith of having received him, and all the benefit of his death, in the Sacrament. And so he *covers sin*; that is, keeps our sins of infirmity, and all such sins, as do not in their nature quench the light of his grace, from coming into his Father's presence, or calling for vengeance there. Forgiving of transgressions is the general satisfaction for all the world, and restoring the world to a possibility of salvation in the death of Christ; covering of sin, is the benefit of discharging and easing the conscience, by those blessed helps which God hath afforded to those, whom he hath gathered in the bosom, and quickened in the womb of the Christian church. And this is the second beam of blessedness, cast out by David here; and then the third is, the not imputing of iniquity, *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.*

In this also, (as in the two former we did) we consider this *imputing*, and then this *iniquity*, in the root and original signification of the two words. When in this place the Lord is said, *not to impute sin*, it is meant, that the Lord shall not suffer me to impute sin to myself. The word is *cashab*, and *cashab* imports such a thinking, such a surmising, as may be subject to error, and mistaking. To that purpose we find the word, where Hannah was praying, and Eli the priest, who saw her lips move, and heard no prayer come from her, thought she had been drunk, *imputed* drunkenness unto her, and said, *How long wilt thou be drunk? put away thy wine*[15]: so that this *imputing*, is such an imputing of ours as may be erroneous, that is, an imputing from ourselves, in a diffidence, and jealousy, and suspicion of God's goodness towards us. To which purpose, we consider also, that this word, which we translate here *iniquity*, *gnavah*, is oftentimes in the Scripture used for punishment, as well as for sin: and so indifferently for both, as that if we will compare translation with translation, and exposition with exposition, it will be hard for us

[15] 1 Sam. i. 12.

to say, whether Cain said, *Mine iniquity is greater than can be pardoned*, or, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*[16]; and our last translation, which seems to have been most careful of the original, takes it rather so, *My punishment*, in the text, and lays the other, *my sin*, aside in the margin. So then, this imputing, being an imputing which arises from ourselves, and so may be accompanied with error, and mistaking, that we impute that to ourselves, which God doth not impute, and this misimputing of God's anger to ourselves, arising out of his punishments, and his corrections inflicted upon us, that because we have crosses in the world, we cannot believe, that we stand well in the sight of God, or that the forgiving of transgressions, or covering of sins appertains unto us, we justly conceive, that this not imputing of iniquity, is that *Serenitas conscientiæ*, That brightness, that clearness, that peace, and tranquillity, that calm and serenity, that acquiescence, and security of the conscience, in which I am delivered from all scruples, and all timorousness, that my transgressions are not forgiven, or my sins not covered. In the first act, we consider God the Father to have wrought; he proposed, he decreed, he accepted too a sacrifice for all mankind in the death of Christ. In the second, the covering of sins, we consider God the Son to work, *Incubare ecclesiæ*, He sits upon his church, as a hen upon her eggs, he covers all our sins, whom he hath gathered into that body, with spreading himself, and his merits upon us all there. In this third, the not imputing of iniquity, we consider God the Holy Ghost to work, and, as the spirit of consolation, to blow away all scruples, all diffidences, and to establish an assurance in the conscience. The Lord imputes not, that is, the Spirit of the Lord, the Lord the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, suffers not me to impute to myself those sins, which I have truly repented. The over-tenderness of a bruised and a faint conscience may impute sin to itself, when it is discharged; and a seared and obdurate conscience may impute none, when it abounds; if the Holy Ghost work, he rectifies both; and, if God do inflict punishments, (according to the signification of this word *gnavah*) after our repentance, and the seals of our reconciliation, yet he suffers us not to impute those sins to ourselves, or to repute

[16] Gen. iv. 13.

those corrections, punishments, as though he had not forgiven them, or, as though he came to an execution after a pardon, but that they are laid upon us medicinally, and by way of prevention, and precaution against his future displeasure. This is that *Pax conscientiæ*, The peace of conscience, when there is not one sword drawn: this is that *Serenitas conscientiæ*, The meridional brightness of the conscience, when there is not one cloud in our sky. I shall not hope, that original sin shall not be imputed, but fear, that actual sin may: not hope that my dumb sins shall not, but my crying sins may; not hope that my apparent sins, which have therefore induced in me a particular sense of them, shall not, but my secret sins, sins that I am not able to return and represent to mine own memory, may: for this *non imputabit*, hath no limitation; God shall suffer the conscience thus rectified, to terrify itself with nothing; which is also further extended in the original, where it is not *non imputat*, but *non imputabit;* though after all this we do fall into the same, or other sins, yet we shall know our way, and evermore have our consolation in this, that as God hath forgiven our transgression, in taking the sins of all mankind upon himself, for he hath redeemed us, and left out angels, and as he hath covered our sin, that is, provided us the word, and sacraments, and cast off the Jews, and left out the heathen, so he will never impute mine iniquity, never suffer it to terrify my conscience; not now, when his judgments, denounced by his minister, call me to him here; nor hereafter, when the last bell shall call me to him, into the grave; nor at last, when the angel's trumpets shall call me to him, from the dust, in the resurrection. But that, as all mankind hath a blessedness, in Christ's taking our sins, (which was the first article in this catechism) and all the Christian church a blessedness, in covering our sins, (which was the second) so I may find this blessedness, in this work of the Holy Ghost, not to impute, that is, not to suspect, that God imputes any repented sin unto me, or reserves anything to lay to my charge at the last day, which I have prayed may be, and therefore hoped hath been forgiven before. But then, after these three parts, which we have now, in our order proposed at first, passed through, that David applies himself to us, in the most convenient way, by the way of catechism,

and instruction in fundamental things; and then, that he lays for his foundation of all beatitude, blessedness, happiness, which cannot be had, in the consummation, and perfection thereof, but in the next world; but yet, in the third place, gives us an inchoation, an earnest, an evidence of this future and consummate blessedness, in bringing us faithfully to believe, that Christ died sufficiently for all the world, that Christ offers the application of all this, to all the Christian church, that the Holy Ghost seals an assurance thereof, to every particular conscience well rectified; after all this done thus largely on God's part, there remains something to be done on ours, that may make all this effectual upon us, *Ut non sit dolus in spiritu, That there be no guile in our spirit*, which is our fourth part, and conclusion of all.

Of all these fruits of this blessedness, there is no other root but the goodness of God himself; but yet they grow in no other ground, than in that man, *In cujus spiritu non est dolus.* The comment and interpretation of St. Paul, hath made the sense and meaning of this place clear: *To him that worketh, the reward is of debt, but to him that believeth, and worketh not, his faith is counted for righteousness, even as David describeth the blessedness of man*, says the apostle there[17], and so proceeds with the very words of this text. Doth the apostle then, in this text, exclude the co-operation of man? Differs this proposition, That the man in whom God imprints these beams of blessedness, must be without guile in his spirit, from those other propositions, *Si vis ingredi, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*[18]; And, *Maledictus qui non, Cursed is he that performs not all?* Grows not the blessedness of this text, from the same root, as the blessedness in Psalm cxix. 1, *Blessed are they, who walk in the way of the Lord?* Or doth St. Paul take David to speak of any other blessedness in our text, than himself speaks of, *If through the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live*[19]? Doth St. Paul require nothing, nothing out of this text, to be done by man? Surely he does; and these propositions are truly all one, *Tantum credideris*, Only believe, and you shall be saved;

[17] Rom. iv. 5. [18] Matt. xix. 17. [19] Rom. viii. 13.

and, *Fac hoc et vives*, Do this, and you shall be saved; as it is truly all one purpose, to say, If you live you may walk, and to say, If you stretch out your legs, you may walk. To say, Eat of this tree, and you shall recover, and to say, Eat of this fruit, and you shall recover, is all one; to attribute an action to the next cause, or to the cause of that cause, is, to this purpose, all one. And therefore, as God gave a reformation to his Church, in prospering that doctrine, that justification was by faith only: so God give an unity to his Church, in this doctrine, that no man is justified, that works not; for, without works, how much soever he magnify his faith, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, *Guile in his spirit.*

As then the prophet David's principal purpose in this text, is, according to the interpretation of St. Paul, to derive all the blessedness of man from God: so is it also to put some conditions in man, comprehended in this, *That there be no guile in his spirit.* For, in this repentant sinner, that shall be partaker of these degress of blessedness, of this *forgiving*, of this *covering*, of this *not imputing*, there is required *Integra pœnitentia*, A perfect, and entire repentance; and to the making up of that, howsoever the words and terms may have been misused, and defamed, we acknowledge, that there belongs a contrition, a confession, and a satisfaction; and all these (howsoever our adversaries slander us, with a doctrine of ease, and a religion of liberty) we require with more exactness, and severity, than they do. For, for contrition, we do not, we dare not say, as some of them, that attrition is sufficient; that it is sufficient to have such a sorrow for sin, as a natural sense, and fear of torment doth imprint in us, without any motion of the fear of God: we know no measure of sorrow great enough for the violating of the infinite majesty of God, by our transgression. And then for confession, we deny not a necessity to confess to man; there may be many cases of scruple, of perplexity, where it were an exposing ourselves to farther occasions of sin, not to confess to man; and in confession, we require a particular detestation of that sin which we confess, which they require not. And lastly, for satisfaction, we embrace that rule, *Condigna satisfactio male facta corrigere*[20], Our best satisfaction is, to be better in the amend-

[20] Bernard.

ment of our lives: and dispositions to particular sins, we correct in our bodies by discipline, and mortifications; and we teach, that no man hath done truly that part of repentance, which he is bound to do, if he have not given satisfaction, that is, restitution, to every person damnified by him. If that which we teach, for this entireness of repentance, be practised, in contrition, and confession, and satisfaction, they cannot calumniate our doctrine, nor our practice herein; and if it be not practised, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, *Guile in their spirit*, that pretend to any part of this blessedness, *forgiving*, or *covering*, or *not imputing*, without this. For he that is sorry for sin, only in contemplation of hell, and not of the joys of heaven, that would not give over his sin, though there were no hell, rather than he would lose heaven, (which is that which some of them call attrition) he that confesses his sin, but hath no purpose to leave it, he that does leave the sin, but being grown rich by that sin, retains, and enjoys those riches, this man is not entire in his repentance, but there is guile in his spirit.

*He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster*[21]; He that makes half repentances, makes none. Men run out of their estates, as well by a negligence, and a not taking account of their officers, as by their own prodigality: our salvation is as much endangered, if we call not our conscience to an examination, as if we repent not those sins, which offer themselves to our knowledge, and memory. And therefore David places the consummation of his victory in that, *I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them, neither did I turn again, till they were consumed*[22]: we require a pursuing of the enemy, a search for the sin, and not to stay till an officer, that is, a sickness, or any other calamity light upon that sin, and so bring it before us; we require an overtaking of the enemy, that we be not weary, in the search of our consciences; and we require a consuming of the enemy, not a weakening only; a dislodging, a dispossessing of the sin, and the profit of the sin; all the profit, and all the pleasure of all the body of sin; for he that is sorry with a godly sorrow, he that confesses with a deliberate detestation, he that satisfies with a full restitution for all his sins but

[21] Prov. xviii. 9. [22] Psalm xviii. 37.

one, *Dolus in spiritu*, There is guile in his spirit, and he is in no better case, than if at sea he should stop all leaks but one, and perish by that. *Si vis solvi, solve omnes catenas*[23]; If thou wilt be discharged, cancel all thy bonds; one chain till that be broke, holds as fast as ten. And therefore suffer your consideration to turn back a little upon this subject, that there may be *Dolus in spiritu, Guile in the spirit*, in our pretence to all those parts of blessedness, which David recommends to us in this catechism, in the *forgiveness of transgressions*, in the *covering of sin*, in the *not imputing of iniquity*.

First then, in this *forgiving of transgressions*, which is our Saviour Christ's taking away the sins of the world, by taking them, in the punishment due to them, upon himself, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, Guile in that man's spirit, that will so far abridge the great volumes of the mercy of God, so far contract his general propositions, as to restrain this salvation, not only in the effect, but in God's own purpose, to a few, a very few souls. When subjects complain of any prince, that he is too merciful, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, Guile and deceit in this complaint; they do but think him too merciful to other men's faults; for, where they need his mercy for their own, they never think him too merciful. And which of us do not need God for all sins? If we did not in ourselves, yet it were a new sin in us, not to desire that God should be as merciful to every other sinner, as to ourselves. As in heaven, the joy of every soul shall be my joy, so the mercy of God to every soul here, is a mercy to my soul; by the extension of his mercies to others, I argue the application of his mercy to myself. This contracting, and abridging of the mercy of God, will end in despair of ourselves, that that mercy reaches not to us, or if we become confident, perchance presumptuous of ourselves, we shall despair in the behalf of other men, and think they can receive no mercy: and when men come to allow an impossibility of salvation in any, they will come to assign that impossibility, nay to assign those men, and pronounce, for this, and this sin, this man cannot be saved. There is a sin against the Holy Ghost; and to make us afraid of all approaches towards that sin, Christ hath told us, that that sin is irremissible,

[23] Bernard.

unpardonable; but since that sin includes impenitibleness in the way, and actual impenitence in the end, we can never pronounce, this is that sin, or this is that sinner. God is his Father that can say, *Our Father which art in heaven*, and his God that can say, *I believe in God;* and there is *Dolus in spiritu*, Guile in his spirit, the craft of the serpent, (either the poison of the serpent, in a self-despair, or the sting of the serpent, in an uncharitable prejudging, and precondemning of others) when a man comes to suspect God's good purposes, or contract God's general propositions; for this forgiving of transgressions, is Christ's taking away the sins of all the world, by taking all the sins of all men upon himself. And this *guile*, this deceit may also be in the second, in the *covering of sins*, which is the particular application of this general mercy, by his ordinances in his church.

He then that without guile will have benefit by this covering, must discover. *Qui tegi vult peccata, detegat*, is St. Augustine's way: he that will have his sins covered, let him uncover them; he that would not have them known, let him confess them; he that would have them forgotten, let him remember them; he that would bury them, let him rake them up. *There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known*[24]. It is not thy sending away a servant, thy locking a door, thy blowing out a candle, no not though thou blow out, and extinguish the spirit, as much as thou canst, that hides a sin from God; but since thou thinkest that thou hast hid it, by the secret carriage thereof, thou must reveal it by confession. If thou wilt not, God will show thee that he needed not thy confession; he will take knowledge of it, to thy condemnation, and he will publish it to the knowledge of all the world, to thy confusion. *Tu fecisti abscondite*, says God to David, by Nathan, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun*[25]. Certainly it affects, and stings many men more, that God hath brought to light their particular sins and offences, for which he does punish them, than all the punishments that he inflicts upon them; for then, they cannot lay their ruin upon fortune, upon vicissitudes, and revolutions, and changes of

[24] Matt. x. 26. [25] 2 Sam. xii. 12.

court, upon disaffections of princes, upon supplantations of rivals and concurrents; but God clears all the world beside; *Perditio tua ex te*, God declares that the punishment is his act, and the cause, my sin. This is God's way; and this he expresses vehemently against Jerusalem, *Behold, I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou hast hated, and I will discover thy nakedness to all them*[26]. Those who loved us for pretended virtues, shall see how much they were deceived in us; those that hated us, because they were able to look into us, and to discern our actions, shall then say triumphantly, and publicly to all, Did not we tell you what would become of this man? It was never likely to be better with him. *I will strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born*[27]; howsoever thou wert covered with the covenant, and taken into the visible church, howsoever thou were clothed, by having put on Christ in baptism, yet, *If thou sin against me*, (says God) *and hide it from me, I am against thee, and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame*[28].

To come to the covering of thy sins without guile, first cover them not from thyself, so, as that thou canst not see yesterday's sin, for to-day's sin; nor the sins of thy youth, for thy present sins: cover not thy extortions with magnific buildings, and sumptuous furniture; dung not the fields that thou hast purchased with the bodies of those miserable wretches, whom thou hast oppressed, neither straw thine alleys and walks with the dust of God's saints, whom thy hard dealing hath ground to powder. There is but one good way of covering sins from ourselves, *Si bona facta malis superponamus*[29], If we come to a habit of good actions, contrary to those evils, which we had accustomed ourselves to, and cover our sins so; not that we forget the old, but that we see no new.

There is a good covering of sins from ourselves, by such new habits, and there is a good covering of them from other men; for, he that sins publicly, scandalously, avowedly, that teaches

[26] Ezek. xvi. 37. [27] Hosea ii. 3.
[28] Nahum iii. 5. [29] Gregory.

and encourages others to sin, *That declares his sin as Sodom, and hides it not*[30], as in a mirror, in a looking-glass, that is compassed and set about with a hundred lesser glasses, a man shall see his deformities in a hundred places at once, so he that hath sinned thus shall feel his torments in himself, and in all those, whom the not covering of his sins hath occasioned to commit the same sins. Cover thy sins then from thyself, so it be not by obduration; cover them from others, so it be not by hypocrisy; but from God cover them not at all; *He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy*[31]; even in confessing, without forsaking, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, Guile and deceit in that spirit. *Noluit agnoscere, maluit ignoscere*, St. Augustine makes the case of a customary sinner; he was ready to pardon himself always without any confession; but God shall invert it to his subversion, *Maluit agnoscere, noluit ignoscere*, God shall manifest his sin, and not pardon it.

Sin hath that pride, that it is not content with one garment; Adam covered first with fig-leaves, then with whole trees, *He hid himself amongst the trees:* then he covered his sin, with the woman; *she provoked him:* and then with God's action, *Quam tu dedisti, The woman whom thou gavest me;* and this was Adam's wardrobe. David covers his first sin of uncleanness with soft stuff, with deceit, with falsehood, with soft persuasions to Uriah, to go in to his wife; then he covers it with rich stuff, with scarlet, with the blood of Uriah, and of the army of the Lord of hosts; and then he covers it with strong and durable stuff, with an impenitence, and with an insensibleness, a year together; too long for a king, too long for any man, to wear such a garment: and this was David's wardrobe. But beloved, sin is a serpent, and he that covers sin, does but keep it warm, that it may sting the more fiercely, and disperse the venom and malignity thereof the more effectually. Adam had patched up an apron to cover him; God took none of those leaves; God wrought not upon his beginnings, but he covered him all over with durable skins. God saw that David's several coverings did rather load him, than cover the sin, and therefore *Transtulit*, He took all away, sin, and covering: for the coverings were as great sins, as the radical

[30] Isaiah iii. 9. [31] Prov. xxviii. 13.

sin, that was to be covered, was; yea greater; as the arms and boughs of a tree, are greater than the root. Now to this extension, and growth, and largeness of sin, no lesser covering serves than God in his church. It was the prayer against them, who hindered the building of the temple, *Cover not their iniquity, neither let their sin be put out in thy presence*[32]. Our prayer is, *Peccata nostra non videat, ut nos videat*[33], Lord look not upon our sins, that thou mayest look upon us. And since amongst ourselves, it is the effect of love, to cover *Multitudinem peccatorum*[34], The multitude of sins, yea to cover *Universa delicta, Love covereth all sins*[35], much more shall God, who is *love* itself, cover our sins so, as he covered the Egyptians, in a Red Sea, in the application of his blood, by visible means in his church. That therefore thou mayest be capable of this covering, *commit thy ways unto the Lord*[36]; that is, show unto him, by way of confession, what wrong ways thou hast gone, and inquire of him by prayer, what ways thou art to go, and (as it is in the same Psalm) *He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day;* and so there shall be no *guile* found in thy *spirit*, which might hinder this *covering of thy sin*, which is, the application of Christ's merits, in the ordinances of his church, nor the *not imputing of thine iniquity*, which is our last consideration, and the conclusion of all.

This *not imputing*, is that serenity and acquiescence, which a rectified conscience enjoys, when the spirit of God bears witness with my spirit, that, thus reconciled to my God, I am now guilty of nothing. St. Bernard defines the conscience thus, *Inseparabilis gloria, vel confusio uniuscujusque, pro qualitate depositi:* It is that inseparable glory, or that inseparable confusion which every soul hath, according to that which is deposited, and laid up in it. Now what is deposited, and laid up in it? Naturally, hereditary, patrimonially, *Con-reatus*, says that father, from our first parents, a fellow-guiltiness of their sin; and they have left us sons and heirs of the wrath and indignation of God, and that is the treasure they have laid up for us. Against this, God hath provided baptism; and baptism washes away that sin; for as

[32] Nehem. iv. 5. [33] Augustine. [34] 1 Pet. iv. 8.
[35] Prov. x. 12. [36] Psalm xxxvii. 6.

we do nothing to ourselves in baptism, but are therein merely passive, so neither did we anything ourselves in original sin, but therein are merely passive too; and so the remedy, baptism is proportioned to the disease, original sin. But original sin being thus washed away, we make a new stock, we take in a new *depositum*, a new treasure, actual and habitual sins, and therein much being done by ourselves, against God, into the remedy, there must enter something to be done by ourselves, and something by God; and therefore we bring water to his wine, true tears of repentance to his true blood in the sacrament, and so receive the seals of our reconciliation, and having done that, we may boldly say unto God, *Do not condemn me: show me wherefore thou contendest with me*[37]. When we have said as he doth, *I have sinned, what shall I do to thee*[38]? And have done that that he hath ordained, we may say also as he doth, *O thou preserver of men, why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?* Why dost thou suffer me to faint and pant under this sad apprehension, that all is not yet well between my soul and thee? We are far from encouraging any man to antidate his pardon; to presume his pardon to be passed before it is: but when it is truly passed the seals of reconciliation, there is *Dolus in spiritu*, Guile and deceit in that spirit, nay it is the spirit of falsehood and deceit itself, that will not suffer us to enjoy that pardon, which God hath sealed to us, but still maintain jealousies, and suspicion, between God and us. My heart is not opener to God, than the bowels of his mercy are to me; and to accuse myself of sin, after God hath pardoned me, were as great a contempt of God, as to presume of that pardon, before he had granted it; and so much a greater, as it is directed against his greatest attribute, his mercy. *Si apud Deum deponas injuriam, ipse ultor erit*[39], Lay all the injuries that thou sufferest, at God's feet, and he will revenge them; *Si damnum, ipse restituet;* Lay all thy losses there, and he will repair them; *Si dolorem, ipse medicus;* Lay down all thy diseases there, and he shall heal thee; *Si mortem, ipse resuscitator*, Die in his arms, and he shall breathe a new life into thee; add we to Tertullian: *Si peccata, ipse sepe-*

[37] Job x. 2. [38] Job vii. 20. [39] Tertullian.

*liet*, Lay thy sins in his wounds, and he shall bury them so deep, that only they shall never have resurrection: the sun shall set, and have a to-morrow's resurrection; herbs shall have a winter death, and a spring's resurrection; thy body shall have a long winter's night, and then a resurrection; only thy sins buried in the wounds of thy Saviour, shall never have resurrection; and therefore take heed of that deceit in the spirit, of that spirit of deceit, that makes thee impute sins to thyself, when God imputes them not; but rejoice in God's general *forgiving of transgressions*, that Christ hath died for all, multiply thy joy in the *covering of thy sin*, that Christ hath instituted a church, in which that general pardon is made thine in particular, and exalt thy joy, in the *not imputing of iniquity*, in that serenity, that tranquillity, that God shall receive thee, at thy last hour, in thy last bath, the sweat of death, as lovingly, as acceptably, as innocently, as he received thee, from thy first bath, the laver of regeneration, the font in baptism. *Amen.*

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## SERMON LV.

### *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

### Psalm xxxii. 3, 4.

When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.
For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

All ways of teaching, are rule and example: and though ordinarily the rule be first placed, yet the rule itself is made of examples: and when a rule would be of hard digestion to weak understandings, example concocts it, and makes it easy: for example in matter of doctrine, is as assimilation in matter of nourishment; the example makes that that is proposed for our learning and farther instruction, like something which we knew

before, as assimilation makes that meat, which we have received, and digested, like those parts, which are in our bodies before. David was the sweet singer of Israel; shall we say, God's precentor? His son Solomon was the powerful preacher of Israel; shall we say, God's chaplain? Both of them, excellent, abundantly, superabundantly excellent in both those ways of teaching; poet, and preacher, proceed in these ways in both, rule, and example, the body and soul of instruction. So this Psalm is qualified in the title thereof, *A Psalm of David giving instruction.* And having given his instruction the first way, by rule, in the two former verses, that *blessedness* consisted in the *remission of sins*, but that this *remission of sins* was imparted to none, *Cui dolus in spiritu, In whose spirit there was any deceit*, he proceeds in this text, to the other fundamental, and constitutive element of instruction, example; and by example he shows, how far they are from that blessedness, that consists in the remission of sins, that proceed with any deceit in their spirit. And that way of instruction, by example, shall be our first consideration; and our second, That he proposes himself for the example, *I kept silence*, says he, and so *my bones waxed old*, &c. And then, in a third part, we shall see, how far this holy ingenuity goes, what he confesses of himself: and that third part will subdivide itself, and flow out into many branches. First, That it was he himself that was *In doloso spiritu*, In whose spirit there was deceit, *Quia tacuit*, Because he held his tongue, because he disguised his sins, because he did not confess them. And yet, in the midst of this silence of his, God brought him *ad rugitum*, to voices of roaring, of exclamation, to a sense of pain, and a sense of shame; so far he had a voice, but still he was in silence, for any matter of repentance. Secondly, he confesses the effect of this his silence, and this his roaring, *Inveteraverunt ossa, My bones waxed old*, and, *my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.* And then thirdly, he confesses the reason from whence this inveteration in his bones, and this incineration in his body proceeded, *Quia aggravata manus*, because the *hand of God* lay *heavy* upon him, heavy in the present weight, and heavy in the long continuation thereof, *day* and *night.* And lastly, all this he seals with that *selah*, which you find at the end of the verse, which is a

kind of *affidavit*, of earnest asseveration, and re-affirming the same thing, a kind of *amen*, and ratification to that which was said; *selah*, truly, verily, thus it was with me, when I kept silence, and deceitfully smothered my sins, the hand of God lay heavy upon me, and as truly, as verily it will be no better with any man, that suffers himself to continue in that case.

First then, for the assistance, and the power, that example hath in instruction, we see Christ's method, *Quid ab initio*, How was it from the beginning; do as hath been done before. We see God's method to Moses, for the Tabernacle, *Look that thou make everything, after thy pattern, which was showed thee in the Mount*[1]; and for the creation itself, we know God's method too; for though there were no world, that was elder brother to this world before, yet God in his own mind and purpose had produced, and lodged certain ideas, and forms, and patterns of every piece of this world, and made them according to those preconceived forms, and ideas. When we consider the ways of instruction, as they are best pursued in the Scriptures, so are there no books in the world, that do so abound with this comparative and exemplary way of teaching, as the Scriptures do; no books, in which that word of reference to other things, that *sicut* is so often repeated, do this, and do that, *sicut*, so, as you see such and such things in nature do; and *sicut*, so as you find such and such men, in story, to have done. So David deals with God himself, he proposes him an example; I ask no more favour at thy hands, for thy church now, than thou hast afforded them heretofore, do but unto these men now, *Sicut Midianitis*, As unto the Midianites, *Sicut Siserœ*, As unto Sisera, as unto Jabin[2]: make their nobles *Sicut Oreb*, Like Oreb and like Zeb, and all their princes *Sicut Zeba*, As Zeba and as Zalmana. For these had been examples of God's justice: and to be made examples of God's anger, is the same thing, as to be a malediction, a curse. For, in that law of jealousy, that bitter potion which the suspected woman was to take, was accompanied with this imprecation, *The Lord make thee a curse among the people*[3]; so we read it; but St. Hierome, *In exemplum*, *The Lord make thee an*

[1] Exod. xxiv. 40. [2] Psal. lxxxiii. 3. [3] Num. v. 26.

*example among the people;* that is, deal with thee so, as posterity may be afraid, when it shall be said of any of them, Lord deal with this woman so, as thou didst with that adulteress. And so the prayer of the people is upon *Boaz, Ut sit in exemplum,* (as St. Hierome also reads that place) *The Lord make thee an example of virtue in Ephrata, and in Bethlem*[4]; that is, that God's people might propose him to themselves, conform themselves to him, and walk as he did. As on the other side, the anger of God is threatened so, God shall make thee *Exemplum et stuporem*[5], An example and a consternation; and *Exemplum et derisum*[6], An example and a scorn; that posterity, whensoever they should be threatened with God's judgments, they might presently return to such examples, and conclude, if our sins be to their example, our judgments will follow their example too, a judgment accompanied with a consternation, a consternation aggravated with a scorn, we shall be a prey to our enemies, an astonishment to ourselves, a contempt to all the world; we do according to their example, and according to their example we shall suffer, is not a conclusion of any Sorbonne, nor a decision of any Rota, but the logic of the universal university, heaven itself. And so when the prophet would be excused from undertaking the office of a prophet, he says, *Adam exemplum meum ab adolescentia*[7], Adam hath been the example, that I have proposed to myself from my youth; as Adam did, so in the sweat of my brows, I also have eat my bread; I have kept cattle; I have followed a country life, and not made myself fit for the office and function of a prophet, Adam hath been my example from my youth. And when Solomon did not propose a man, he proposed something else for his example, an example he would have; he looked upon the ill husband's land, and he saw it overgrown, *Et exemplo didici disciplinam*[8], By that example I learnt to be wiser. Enter into the armoury, search the body and bowels of story, for an answer to the question in Job, *Quis periit, Whoever perished being innocent, or where were the righteous cut off*[9]? There is not one example; nowhere; never. Answer but that out of records, *Quis restitit, Who hath hardened himself against the Lord, and prospered*[10]? Or that

[4] Ruth. iv. 11. [5] Ezek. v. 15. [6] Jer. xlviii. 39. [7] Zech. xiii. 5. [8] Pro. xxiv. 32. [9] Job iv. 7. [10] Job ix. 4.

*Quis contradicet, If he cut off, who can hinder him*[11]? There is no example; no man, by no means. So, if thou be tempted with over-valuing thine own purity, find an example to answer that, *Quis mundum, Who can bring a clean thing out of uncleanness*[12]? Or that, *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin*[13]? There is no example; no man ever did it; no man can say it. If thou be tempted to worship God in an image, be able to answer God something to that, *To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him*[14]? There can be no example, no pattern to make God by: for, that were to make God a copy, and the other, by which he were made, the original. If thou have a temptation to withdraw thyself from the discipline of that church, in which God hath given thee thy baptism, find an example, to satisfy thy conscience, and God's people, in what age, in what place, there was any such church instituted, or any such discipline practised, as thou hast fancied to thyself. Believe nothing for which thou hast not a rule; do nothing for which thou hast not an example; for there is not a more dangerous distemper in either belief or practice, than singularity; for there only may we justly call for miracles, if men will present to us, and bind us to things that were never believed, never done before. David therefore, in this Psalm, his Psalm of instruction, (as himself calls it) doth both; he lays down the rule, he establishes it by example, and that was our first consideration, and we have done with that.

Our second is, That he goes not far for his example; he labours not to show his reading, but his feeling; not his learning, but his compunction; his conscience is his library, and his example is himself, and he does not unclasp great volumes, but unbutton his own breast, and from thence he takes it. Men that give rules of civil wisdom, and wise conversation amongst men, use to say, that a wise man must never speak much of himself; it will argue, say they, a narrow understanding, that he knows little besides his own actions, or else that he overvalues his own actions, if he bring them much into discourse. But the wise men that seek Christ, (for there were such wise men in the world once)

[11] Job xi. 10.
[12] Prov. xx. 9.
[13] Job xiv. 27.
[14] Isaiah xl. 18.

statesmen in the kingdom of heaven, they go upon other grounds, and, wheresoever they may find them, they seek such examples, as may conduce most to the glory of God: and when they make themselves examples, they do not rather choose themselves than others, but yet they do not spare, nor forbear themselves more than other men. David proposes his own example, to his own shame, but to God's glory. For David was one of those persons, *Qui non potuit solus perire*[15], He could not sin alone, his sin authorized sin in others: princes and prelates, are doctrinal men, in this sense and acceptation, that the subject makes the prince's life his doctrine; he learns his catechism by the eye, he does what he sees done, and frames to himself rules out of his superiors' example. Therefore, for their doctrine, David proposes truly his own example, and without disguising, tells that of himself, which no man else could have told. Christ who could do nothing but well, proposes himself for an example of humility, *I have given you an example*[16]; whom? what? *That you should do as I have done.* So St. Paul instructs Titus, *In all things show a pattern of good works*[17]; but whom? for Titus might have showed them many patterns; but *show thyself a pattern*, says the apostle; and not only of assiduous, and laborious preaching, but *of good works.* And this is that, for which he recommends Timothy to the church, *He works the work of the Lord*[18], and, not without a pattern, nor without that pattern, which St. Paul had given him in himself, *He works so, as I also do.* St. Paul, who had proposed Christ to himself to follow, might propose himself to others, and wish as he does, *I would all men were even as myself.* For, though that apostle, by denying it in his own practice, seem to condemn it in all others, to preach ourselves, (*We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*[19]) yet to preach out of our own history, so far, as to declare to the congregation, to what manifold sins we had formerly abandoned ourselves, how powerfully the Lord was pleased to reclaim us, how vigilantly he hath vouchsafed to preserve us from relapsing, to preach ourselves thus, to call up the congregation, to hear what God hath done for my soul, is a blessed preaching of myself. And therefore Solomon

[15] Bernard. [16] John iii. 15. [17] Titus ii. 7.
[18] 1 Cor. xvi. 10. [19] 2 Cor. iv. 5.

does not speak of himself so much, nor so much propose and exhibit himself to the church, in any book, as in that which he calls the *Preacher*, *Ecclesiastes:* in that book, he hides none of his own sins; none of those practices, which he had formerly used to hide his sins: he confesses things there, which none knew but himself, nor durst, nor should have published them of him, the king, if they had known them. So Solomon preaches himself to good purpose, and pours out his own soul in that book. Which is one of the reasons which our interpreters assign[20], why Solomon calls himself by this name, *ecclesiastes*, *coheleth*, which is a word of the feminine gender, and not *concionator*, but *concionatrix*, a she-preacher, because it is *anima concionatrix*, it is his soul that preaches, he pours out his own soul to the congregation, in letting them know, how long the Lord let him run on in vanities, and vexation of spirit, and how powerfully and effectually he reclaimed him at last: for, from this book, the preacher, the she-preacher, the soul-preacher, Solomon preaching himself, rather herself, the church raises convenient arguments (and the best that are raised) for the proof of the salvation of Solomon, of which divers doubted. And though Solomon in this book speaks divers things, not as his own opinion, but in the sense of worldly men, yet, as we have a note upon Plato's Dialogues, that though he do so too, yet whatsoever Plato says in the name and person of Socrates, that Plato always means for his own opinion, so whatsoever Solomon says in the name of the preacher, (the preacher says this, or says that) that is evermore Solomon's own saying. When the preacher preaches himself, his own sins, and his own sense of God's mercies, or judgments upon him, as that is intended most for the glory of God, so it should be applied most by the hearer, for his own edification; for, he were a very ill-natured man, that should think the worse of a preacher, because he confesses himself to be worse than he knew him to be, before he confessed it. Therefore David thought it not enough, to have said to his confessor, to Nathan, in private, *Peccavi, I have sinned;* but here, before the face of the whole church of God, even to the end of the world, (for so long these records are to last) he proposes himself, for an exemplary sinner, for a sinful

[20] Lorin. Proleg. C. 5.

example, and for a subject of God's indignation, whilst he remained so, *When I kept silence*, and yet *roared, thy hand lay heavy upon me, and my moisture was turned into the drought of summer*. And so we are come to our third part, He teaches by example; he proposes himself for the example; and of himself he confesses those particulars, which constitute our text.

Three things he confesses in this example. First, that it was he himself that was *in doloso spiritu*, that had deceit in his spirit, *Quia tacuit*, Because he held his tongue, he disguised his sins, he did not confess them; and yet, in the midst of this silence of his, God brought him *Ad rugitum*, To voices of roaring, of exclamation, to a sense of pain, or shame, or loss; so far he had a voice; but still he was in silence, for any matter of repentance. Secondly, he confesses a lamentable effect of this silence, and this roaring, *Inveteraverunt ossa*, His bones were consumed, waxen old, and his moisture dried up; and then he takes knowledge of the cause of all this calamity, the weight of God's heavy hand upon him. And to this confession he sets to that seal, which is intended in the last word, *selah*.

First then, David confesses his silence; therefore it was a fault: and he confesses it, as an instance, as an example of his being *In doloso spiritu*, That there was deceit in his spirit; as long as he was silent, he thought to delude God, to deceive God; and this was the greatest fault. If I be afraid of God's power, because I consider that he can destroy a sinner, yet I have his will for my buckler; I remember, that he would not the death of a sinner. If I be afraid that his will may be otherwise bent, (for what can I tell, whether it may not be his will to glorify himself in surprising me in my sins?) I have his word for my buckler, *Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus*, God does nothing, but that his mercy is supereminent in that work, whatsoever; but if I think to escape his knowledge, by hiding my sins from him, by my silence, I am *in doloso spiritu*, if I think to deceive God, I deceive myself, and there is no truth in me.

When we are to deal with fools, we must, or we must not answer, as they may receive profit, or inconvenience by our answer, or our silence. *Answer not a fool, according to his foolishness, lest thou be like him:* but yet, in the next verse, *Answer a*

*fool according to his foolishness, lest he be wise in his own conceit*[21]. But answer God always. Though he speak in the foolishness of preaching, as himself calls it, yet he speaks wisdom, that is, peace to thy soul. We are sure that there is a good silence; for we have a rule for it from Christ, whose actions are more than examples, for his actions are rules. His patience wrought so that he would not speak, his afflictions wrought so that he could not. *He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and he was dumb*[22]; There he would not speak; *My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death*[23], says David in the person of Christ, and here he could not speak.

Here is a good silence in our rule: so is there also in examples derived from that rule. There is *Silentium reverentiæ*, A silence of reverence, for respect of the presence; *The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the world keep silence before him*[24]. When the Lord is working in his temple, in his ordinances, and institutions, let not the wisdom of all the world dispute why God instituted those ordinances, the foolishness of preaching, or the simplicity of sacraments in his church. Let not the wisdom of private men dispute, why those whom God hath accepted as the representation of the church, those of whom Christ says, *Dic ecclesiæ, Tell the church*, have ordained these, or these ceremonies for decency, and uniformity, and advancing of God's glory, and men's devotion in the church; let all the earth be silent, *In sacramentis*, The whole church may change no sacraments, nor articles of faith, and let particular men be silent *in sacramentalibus*, in those things which the church hath ordained, for the better conveying, and imprinting, and advancing of those fundamental mysteries; for this silence of reverence which is an acquiescence in those things which God hath ordained, immediately, as sacraments, or ministerially, as other ritual things in the church, David would not have complained of, nor repented.

And to this may well be referred *silentium subjectionis*, that silence which is a recognition, a testimony of subjection. *Let the women keep silence in the church, for they ought to be subject*[25];

[21] Prov. xxvi. 4, 5. [22] Isaiah liii. 7. [23] Psalm xxii. 15.
[24] Hab. ii. ult. [25] 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

and, *Let the women learn in silence, with all subjection*[26]. As far as any just commandment, either expressly, or tacitly reaches, in enjoyning silence, we are bound to be silent: in moral seals of secrets, not to discover those things which others upon confidence, or for our counsel, have trusted us withal; in charitable seals, not to discover those sins of others, which are come to our particular knowledge, but not by a judicial way; in religious seals, not to discover those things which are delivered us in confession, except in cases excepted in that canon; in secrets delivered under these seals, of nature, of law, of ecclesiastical canons, we are bound to be silent, for this is *silentium subjectionis*, an evidence of our subjection to superiors. But since God hath made man with that distinctive property, that he can speak, and no other creature; since God made the first man able to speak, as soon as he was in the world; since in the order of the Nazarites instituted in the Old Testament, though they forbore wine, and outward care of their comeliness, in cutting their hair, and otherwise, yet they bound not themselves to any silence; since in the other sects, which grew up amongst the Jews, Pharisees, and Sadducees, and Essenes, amongst all their superfluous, and superstitious austerities, there was no inhibition of speaking, and communication; since in the twilight between the Old and New Testament, that dumbness which was cast upon Zachariah[27], was inflicted for a punishment upon him, because he believed not that, that the angel had said unto him, we may be bold to say, That if not that silence, which is enjoined in the Roman church, yet that silence which is practised amongst them, for the concealing of treasons, and those silences which are imposed upon some of their orders, that the Carthusians may never speak but upon Thursdays, others upon other times, they are not *silentia subjectionis*, silences imposed upon any just authority, but they are in *doloso spiritu*, there is deceit in their spirit; if not in every one of them, who execute the commandment, not in every poor Carthusian, yet in them who imposed it, who by such an obedience in impertinent things, infatuate them, and accustom them to a blind and implicit obedience in matters of more dangerous consequence. Silence of reverence, silence of subjection meet in this, and in

[26] 1 Tim. ii. 11. [27] Luke i. 20.

this they determine, that we hold our tongues from questioning anything ordained by God, and from defaming anything done by that power, which is establised by his ordinance. And this silence falls not under David's complaint, nor confession.

We have not long to stay upon this silence, which we call the good silence, because it is not the silence of our text; this only we say, That there is a silence which is absolutely good, always good, and there is another occasionally good, sometimes good, and sometimes not so; and that is *silentium boni*, or *a bono*, an abstinence from speaking, or from doing some things, which of themselves, if no circumstance changed their nature, were good and requisite. *Silentium bonum*, that silence that is absolutely, and always good, is a quiet contentment in all that God sends, *Ne, unde debueras esse dives, fias pauper*[18], Lest when God meant to make thee rich, and have indeed made thee rich, thou make thyself poor, by thinking thyself poor, and misinterpreting God's doing: that thou have not *Præcordia fatui*, as the same father speaks, The bowels of an empty man, whining, and crying bowels; *Sicut rota currus, fœnum portans et murmurans*, As a cart that hath a full and plentiful load, and squeaks and whines the more for that abundance. Neither murmur that thou hast *minus de bonis*, not goods enough, nor *nimis de malis*, afflictions too many, but reckon how much more good God hath showed thee, then thou hast deserved, and how much less ill. *Sit alone, and keep silence, because thou hast borne it*[19], because the Lord hath laid affliction upon thee; thine ease is within two verses, *For the Lord will not forsake thee for ever*[20]. If thou murmur, and say, *Quid feci*, Lord what have I done to thee, that thou shouldst deal thus with me? thou shalt hear the justice of God answer thee, *Verum dicis, nihil fecisti*, Thou hast done nothing, and that is fault enough; nothing for me, nothing for my sake, but all for respect of thyself, in thine own ways, and to thine own ends.

The other good silence is not always good, but occasionally, and circumstantially so; It is a forbearing to speak truth, which may be good then, when our speaking of truth can do no good,

[18] Bernard. [19] Lament. iii. 28. [20] Augustine.

and may do harm. *I will keep my mouth bridled whilst the wicked is in my sight; I was dumb, and spake nothing, I kept silence even from good, and my sorrow was more stirred.*[31] Though it were a vexation to him, though he had a sense, and a remorse, that this was some degree of prevarication, to abandon the defence of God's honour at any time, yet his religious discretion made it appear to him, that this present abstinence would, in the end, conduce more to God's glory. It was the wise man's rule, *Kindle not the coals of sinners, when thou rebukest them, lest thou beest burned in the fiery flames of their sins*[32]. Poison works apace upon choleric complexions; and physicians may catch the plague by going about to cure it. An over-vehement, and unseasonable reprehender of a sin may contract that, or a greater sin himself. I may reprehend a blasphemer, in such a manner, and at such a time, as I could not choose but suspect, that he would multiply blasphemies upon my reprehension; and, though that take off none of his fault, yet it adds to mine, and now God hath two in the bond; he shall answer, and I too, for these later blasphemies. The wise man gave us the rule, *Kindle not coals*, and a good king gave us the example, when Rabshakeh had blasphemed against God and the king; *Let not Hezekiah deceive you, saying, The Lord will deliver us, then they kept silence, and answered him not a word*, says that text; for, (as it is added) *The king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not a word.* There is a religious abstinence, in not answering our adversaries, though their libels, and increpations, and contumelies tend to the dishonour of God. St. Ambrose observed good degrees in this discretion. He notes in David, that *Siluit a bonis*, Though it troubled him, he could hold his peace, when his reply might exasperate others: he notes in Job, (as he reads that place, according to the Septuagint) *Ecce, rideo opprobium, Behold, I laugh at their reproaches*[33]; that he could take pleasure in the goodness of his conscience, for all their calumnies. He notes in St. Paul a higher degree than that; *Maledicimur, et benedicimus*[34], That he when he was reviled could bless them that reviled him. Religious discretion allows us to disguise our anger, and smother our sorrow, when either our

[31] Psal. xxxix. 2. [32] Eccles. viii. 10. [33] Job xix. 7.
[34] 1 Cor. iv. 12.

anger would exasperate, or our sorrow encourage the adversary, to a more vehement opposing of God, and his church, and his children.

But all this is rather true, in private persons, than in those whom God hath sent to do his messages to his people. *When I shall say to the wicked*, (says God to the prophet) *Thou shalt surely die, and thou*, the prophet, *givest him not warning, nor speakest to admonish that he may live, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hands*[35]. And, if every single sinful act, and word, and thought of mine, need the whole blood of Christ Jesus to expiate that, what blood, and what seas of that blood shall I need, when the blood of a whole parish shall be required at my hand, because I forbore to speak plainly of their sins, and God's judgment? It is true, which St. Bernard says, *Discretio mater, et consummatrix virtutum*, Discretion is the mother, and discretion is the nurse of every virtue, but yet, in this commandment which is laid upon us, for the reproof of sin, *Hæc omnis sit nostra discretio*, says he, *ut in hoc nulla sit nobis discretio;* Let this be all our discretion, as discretion is wisdom, that we use no discretion, as discretion is acceptation of persons. *Hæc omnis sapientia, ut in hac parte nulla nobis sit*, Let this be all our wisdom, to proceed in this way, this foolishness of preaching, in season, and out of season. In God's name, let us fall within that danger, if we must needs, that if the poor man speak, they say, What fellow is this[36]? We are fellows in this service, to God's angels, to the Son of God Christ Jesus, who is your High Priest, and we fellow-workmen with him, in your salvation: and, as long as we can escape that imputation, some man holdeth his tongue, because he hath not to answer[37], that either we know not what to say to a doubtful conscience, for our ignorance, or are afraid to reprehend a sin, because we are guilty of that sin ourselves; how far states, and commonwealths may be silent in connivancies, and forbearances, is not our business now; but for us, the ministers of God, *væ nobis, si non evangelizemus*, woe be unto us, if we do not preach the Gospel, and we have no Gospel put into our hands, nor into our mouths, but a conditional Gospel, and therefore we do not preach the Gospel, except we

[35] Ezek. iii. 18. [36] Ecclus. xiii. 23. [37] Ecclus. xx. 6.

preach the judgments belonging to the breach of those conditions: a silence in that, in us, would fall under this complaint, and confession, Because I was silent, these calamities fell upon me.

It becomes not us to think the worst of David, that he was fallen into the deepest degree of this silence, and negligence of his duty to God: but it becomes us well to consider, that if David, a man according to God's heart, had some degrees of this ill silence, it is easy for us to have many. For, for the first degree, we have it, and scarce discern that we have it: for our first silence is but an omission, a not doing of our religious duties, or an unthankfulness for God's particular benefits. When Moses says to his people, *The Lord shall fight for you, et vos tacebitis*, and *you shall hold your peace*[38], there Moses means, you shall not need to speak, the Lord will do it for his own glory, you may be silent. There it was a future thing; but the Lord hath fought many battles for us: he hath fought for our church against superstition, for our land against invasion, for this city against infection, for every soul here against presumption, or else against desperation, *Dominus pugnavit, et nos silemus;* the Lord hath fought for us, and we never thank him. A silence before, a not praying, hath not always a fault in it, because we are often ignorant of our own necessities, and ignorant of the dangers that hang over us; but a silence after a benefit evidently received, a dumb ingratitude is inexcusable.

There is another ill silence, and an unnatural one, for it is a loud silence; it is a bragging of our good works; it is the Pharisee's silence, when by boasting of his fastings, and of his alms, he forgot, he silenced his sins. This is the devil's best merchant: by this man, the devil gets all; for his ill deeds were his before; and now, by this boasting of them, his good works become his too. To contract this, if we have overcome this inconsideration, if we have undertaken some examination of our conscience, yet one survey is not enough; *Delicta quis intelligit*[39]? Who can understand his error? How many circumstances in sin vary the very nature of the sin? and then, of how many coats, and shells, and super-edifications doth that sin, which we think a single sin, consist? When we have passed many scrutinies, many inquisitions

[38] Exod. xiv. 14. [39] Psal. xix. 12.

of the conscience, yet there is never room for a silence; we can never get beyond the necessity of that petition, *Ab occultis*, Lord cleanse me from my secret sins; we shall ever be guilty of sins, which we shall forget, not only because they are so little, but because they are so great; that which should be compunction, will be consternation; and the anguish, which, out of a natural tenderness of conscience, we shall have at the first entering into those sins, will make us dispute on the sin's side, and, for some present ease, and to give our heavy soul breath, we will find excuses for them; and at last slide and wear into a customary practice of them: and though we cannot be ignorant that we do them, yet we shall be ignorant that they are sins; but rather make them things indifferent, or recreations necessary to maintain a cheerfulness, and so to sin on, for fear of despairing in our sins, and we shall never be able to shut our mouths against that petition, *ab occultis;* for, though the sin be manifest, the various circumstances that aggravate the sin, will be secret.

And properly this was David's silence: he confesses his silence to have been *Ex doloso spiritu*, Out of a spirit, in which was deceit; and David did not hope, directly, and determinately to deceive God; but by endeavouring to hide his sin from other men, and from his own conscience, he buried it deeper and deeper, but still under more and more sins. He silences his adultery, but he smothers it, he buries it under a turf of hypocrisy, of dissimulation with Uriah, that he might have gone home, and covered his sin. He silences this hypocrisy; but that must have a larger turf to cover it; he buries it under the whole body of Uriah, treacherously murdered; he silences that murder, but no turf was large enough to cover that, but the defeat of the whole army, and after all, the blaspheming of the name and power of the Lord of hosts, in the ruin of the army. That sin, which, if he would have carried it upward towards God, in confession, would have vanished away, and evaporated, by silencing, by suppressing, by burying multiplied, as corn buried in the earth, multiplies into many ears. And, though he might (perchance for his farther punishment) overcome the remembrance of the first sin, he might have forgot the adultery, and feel no pain of that, yet still being put to a new, and new sin, still the last sin that he did to cover

the rest, could not choose but appear to his conscience, and call upon him for another sin to cover that; howsoever he might forget last year's sins, yet yesterday's sin, or last night's sin will hardly be forgotten yet. And therefore, *Tollite vobiscum verba*, says the prophet, *O Israel return unto the Lord;* but how? *Take unto you words, and turn unto the Lord*[40]. Take unto you your words, words of confession; take unto you his word, the words of his gracious promises; break your silence when God breaks his, in the motions of his Spirit, and God shall break off his purpose of inflicting calamities upon you.

In the mean time, when David was not come so far, but continued silent, silent from confession, God suffers not David to enjoy the benefit of his silence; though he continue his silence towards God, yet God mingles *rugitum cum silentio*, for all his silence, he comes to a voice of roaring and howling, when I was *silent*, my *roaring* consumed me; so that here was a great noise, but no music. Now Theodoret calls this *Rugitum compunctionis;* That it was the inchoation of his repentance, which began diffidently, and with fearful vociferations; and so some of our later men understand it[41]; that because David had continued long in his sin, when the ice brake, it brake with the greater noise; when he returned to speak to God, he spake with the more vehemence. And truly the word *shaag*, *rugiit*, though it signify properly the voice of a lion, yet David uses this word *roaring*, not only of himself, but of himself as he was a type of Christ: for this very word is in the beginning of that Psalm, which Christ repeated upon the cross, or, at least begun it, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, and why art thou so far from the voice of my roaring*[42]? So that, *roaring*, may admit a good sense, and does not always imply a distemper, and inordinateness; for, in Christ it could not; but does it not in our text? In our former translation it might stand in a good sense, where the two actions are distinguished in time, thus, *When I held my tongue*, or, *when I roared*, whether I kept or broke silence, all was one, no more ease in one, than the other. But with the original translation, it cannot be so, which is, *When I held my tongue, through my*

[40] Hos. xiv. 2. [41] Bellarmine. [42] Psal. xxii. 1.

*roaring*, this and this fell upon me: they were concomitant actions, actions intermixed, and at the same time when he was silent, he roared too; and therefore that that he calls *roaring*, is not a voice of repentance, for if he had been come to that, then he had broken his former silence, for that *silence* was a not confessing, a not repenting.

This is then that miserable condition which is expressed in David's case, (though God delivered David from any deadly effect of it) that he had occasion of *roaring*, of *howling*, (as the Scripture speaks often) though he *kept silence:* that he was at never the more ease, for all his sins: the eases that he laid hold on, were new sins in themselves, and yet they did not ease him of his other sins: he kept silence, and yet was put to exclamations. And how many examples can we present to ourselves, in our own memory, where persons which have given themselves all liberty to forge writings, to suborn witnesses, to forswear themselves, to oppress, to murder others, to make their ways easier to their ends, and yet have, for all this, though the hand of justice have not fallen upon them, seen their whole estates consume and moulder away? When men out of their ill-grounded plots, and perverse wisdom, think themselves safe in the silence and secrecy of their sins, God overtakes them, and confounds them, with those two fearful blows, those two thunderbolts, he brings them to exclamations, to vociferations, upon fortune, upon friends, upon servants, upon rivals, and competitors, he brings them to a roaring for their ruin, Never man was thus dealt withal as I am, never such a conspiracy as against me.

And this they do, all day, says David here, *Through my roaring all day*. It was long so with David; a day as long as two of their days, that have days of six months; almost a year was David in this dark, dead silence, before he saw day, or returned to speaking. With those that continue their silence all day, the roaring continues all day too; all their lives, they have new occasions of lamentations, and yet all this reduces them not, but they are benighted, they end their life with fearful voices of desperation, in a roaring, but still in a silence of their sins, and transgressions. And this is that that falls first under his confession, *roaring* with *silence*, pain, and shame, and loss, but all

without confession, or sense of sin. And then, that which falls next under his acknowledgment, is the vehement working, the lamentable effect of this *silence* and *roaring*, inveteration of bones, incineration of his whole substance, *My bones are waxen old, and my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.*

Both these phrases, in which David expresses his own, and prophesies of other such sinner's misery, have a literal, and a spiritual, a natural, and a moral sense. For first, this affliction of this silenced and impenitent sinner though it proceed not from the sense of his sin, though it brought him not yet to a confession, but to a roaring, that is, an impatient repining and murmuring, yet it had so wrought upon his body, and whole constitution, as that it drunk up his natural, and vital moisture; *Spiritus tristis exsiccarat*[43], as Solomon speaks, A broken spirit had dried him up; *His days were consumed like smoke, and his bones were burnt like a hearth*[44]; and that *marrow and fatness*, in which, he says, he had such *satisfaction*, at other times, *was exhausted*[45]. This is the misery of this impenitent sinner, he is beggared, but in the devil's service, he is lamed, but in the devil's wars; his moisture, his blood is dried up, but with licentiousness, with his overwatchings, either to deceive, or to oppress others; for, as the proverb is true, *Plures gula quam gladius*, The throat cuts more throats than the sword does, and eating starves more men than fasting does, because wastefulness induces penury at last, so if all our hospitals were well surveyed, it would be found, that the devil sends more to hospitals than God does, and the stews more than the wars.

Thus his bodily moisture was wasted, literally the sinner is sooner infirmed, sooner deformed, than another man; but there is an *humidum radicale* of the soul too: a tenderness, and a disposition to bewail his sins, with remorseful tears. When Peter had denied his master, and heard the cock crow, he did not stay to make recantations, he did not stay to satisfy them, to whom he had denied Christ, but he looked into himself first, *Flevit amare*, says the Holy Ghost, *He wept bitterly;* his soul was not withered, his moisture was not dried up like summer, as long as

[43] Prov. xvii. 22. [44] Psal. cii. 3. [45] Psal. lxiii. 9.

he could weep. The learned poet[46] hath given some character, some expression of the desperate and irremediable state of the reprobate, when he calls *Plutonem illacrymabilem;* There is the mark of his incorrigibleness, and so of his irrecoverableness, that he cannot weep. A sinful man, an obdurate man, a stony heart may weep: marble, and the hardest sorts of stones weep most, they have the most moisture, the most drops upon them: but this comes not out of them, not from within them; extrinsical occasions, pain, and shame, and want, may bring a sinner to sorrow enough, but it is not a sorrow for his sins; all this while the miserable sinner weeps not, but the miserable man, all this while, though he have winter in his eyes, his soul is turned into the drought of summer. God destroyed the first world; and all flesh with water: tears for the want, or for the loss of friends, or of temporal blessings, do but destroy us. But God begun the new world, the Christian church, with water too, with the sacrament of baptism. Pursue his example; begin thy regeneration with tears; if thou have frozen eyes, thou hast a frozen heart too; if the fires of the Holy Ghost cannot thaw thee, in his promises, the fire of hell will do it much less, which is a fire of obduration, not of liquefaction, and does not melt a soul, to pour it out into a new and better form, but hardens it, nails it, confirms it in the old. Christ bids you *Take heed, that your flight be not in winter*[47]; that your transmigration out of this world be not in cold days of indevotion, nor in short days of a late repentance. Take heed too, that your flight be not in such a summer as this; that your transmigration out of this world be not in such a *drought of summer*, as David speaks of here, That the soul have lost her *humidum radicale*, all her tenderness, or all expressing of that tenderness in the sense of her transgressions. So did David see himself, so did he more foresee in others, that should farther incur God's displeasure, than he (by God's goodness) had done, this exsiccation, this incineration of body and soul; sin burns and turns body and soul to a cinder, but not such a cinder, but that they can, and shall both burn again, and again, and for ever.

And the dangerous effect of this silence and roaring, David expresses in another phrase too, *Inveteraverunt ossa, That his*

[46] Horace. [47] Matt. xxiv. 20.

*bones were waxen old, and consumed;* for so that word *balah* signifies, *Your clothes are not waxed old upon you, nor your shoes waxed old upon your feet*[48]. In the *consuming* of these *bones*, as our former translation hath it, the vehemence of the affliction is presented, and in the *waxing old*, the continuance. Here the rule fails, *Si longa levis, si gravis brevis*, Calamities that last long, are light, and if they be heavy, they are short; both ways there is some intimation of some ease. But God suffers not this sinner to enjoy that ease; God will lay enough upon his body, to kill another in a week, and yet he shall pant many years under it. As the way of his blessing is, *Apprehendet tritura vindemiam, Your vintage shall reach to your threshing, and your threshing to your sowing*[49]; so in an impenitent sinner, his fever shall reach to a frenzy, his frenzy to a consumption, his consumption to a penury, and his penury to a wearying and tiring out of all that are about him, and all the sins of his youth shall meet in the anguish of his body.

But that is not all; *Etiam animæ membra sunt*, says St. Basil, The soul hath her bones too; and those are our best actions; those, which if they had been well done, might have been called good works, and might have met us in heaven; but when a man continues his beloved sin, when he is *in doloso spiritu*, and deals with God in false measures, and false weights, makes deceitful confessions to God, his good works shall do him no good, his *bones* are *consumed*, not able to bear him upright in the sight of God. This David sees in himself, and foresees in others, and he sees the true reason of all this, *Quia aggravata manus, Because the hand of God lies heavy upon him*, which is another branch of his confession.

It was the safety of the spouse, *That his left hand was under her head, and that his right hand embraced her*[50]: and it might well be her safety; for, *Per lævam vita præsens, per dextram æterna designatur*, says St. Gregory, His left hand denotes this, and his right the other life: our happiness in this, our assurance of the next, consists in this, that we are in the hands of God. But here in our text, *God's hand was heavy upon him;* and that is an

[48] Deut. xxix. 5. [49] Levit. xxvi. [50] Cant. ii. 6.

action of pushing away, and keeping down. And then when we see the great power, and the great indignation of God upon the Egyptians, is expressed but so, *Digitus Dei, The finger of God is in it*[51], How heavy an affliction must this of David be esteemed, *quando aggravata manus*, when his whole hand was, and was heavy upon him? Here then is one lesson for all men, and another peculiar to the children of God. This appertains to all, That when they are *in silentio*, in a seared and stupid forgetting of their sins, or *in doloso spiritu*, in half confessions, half abjurations, half detestations of their sins; the hand of God will grow heavy upon them. *Tell your children of it* (says the prophet) *and let your children tell their children, and let their children tell another generation*, (for this belongs to all) *That which is left of the palmer-worm, the grasshopper shall eat, and that that he leaves, the canker-worm shall eat, and the residue of the canker-worm, the caterpillar.* The hand of God shall grow heavy upon a silent sinner, in his body, in his health; and if he conceive a comfort, that for all his sickness, he is rich, and therefore cannot fail of help and attendance, there comes another worm, and devours that, faithlessness in persons trusted by him, oppressions in persons that have trusted him, facility in undertaking for others, corrupt judges, heavy adversaries, tempests and pirates at sea, unseasonable or ill markets at land, costly and expensive ambitions at court, one worm or other shall devour his riches, that he eased himself upon. If he take up another comfort, that though health and wealth decay, though he be poor and weak, yet he hath learning, and philosophy, and moral constancy, and he can content himself with himself, he can make his study a court, and a few books shall supply to him the society and the conversation of many friends, there is another worm to devour this too, the hand of divine justice shall grow heavy upon him, in a sense of an unprofitable retiredness, in a disconsolate melancholy, and at last, in a stupidity, tending to desperation.

This belongs to all, to all non-confitents, that think not of confessing their sins at all, to all semi-confitents, that confess them to halves, without purpose of amendment, *Aggravabitur manus*, The hand of God will grow heavy upon them every way, and

[51] Exod. viii. 19.

stop every issue, every postern, every sally, every means of escape. But that which is peculiar to the children of God, is, that when the hand of God is upon them, they shall know it to be the hand of God, and take hold even of that oppressing hand, and not let it go, till they have received a blessing from it, that is, raised themselves even by that heavy and oppressing hand of his, even in that affliction. That when God shall *fill their faces with shame*, yet they shall *seek his face*[52]; yea, when God shall *kill him*, yet he will *trust in God, and seek him*[53]; and (as the prophet carries it farther) *Cum ingreditur putredo*, when *rottenness* enters into their *bones*, yet they shall *rest* even in that *day of trouble*[54], of dissolution, of putrefaction. God shall call upon them, as he did upon Judah, *Tritura mea, et filius areæ, O my threshing-place, and the son of my floor*[55], thou whom I have beaten and bruised with my flails, when I have threshed, and winnowed, and sifted thee by these afflictions, and by this heavy hand, still thou shalt fix thy faithful eyes in heaven, and see a room reserved there for thee, amongst those, *which come out of great tribulations, and have made their long robes white in the blood of the Lamb; who shall therefore dwell in the midst of them, and govern them, and lead them to the lively fountains of waters, and wipe away all tears from their eyes*[56]. Even upon his own children, his hand shall grow heavy, but that heaviness, that weight shall awake them, and that hand shall guide them, to, and in the ways of peace and reconciliation.

And this both *day* and *night*, as our text says, that is, both in the day of their prosperity, and the night of their adversity. Even in prosperity, the child of God shall feel the hand of God grow heavy upon him: he shall find a guiltiness of not having employed those temporal benefits to their right use; he shall find the *pluit laqueos*[57], a shower of snares to have been poured down upon him; occasions of sin; occasions of falling into sins himself; occasions of drawing others, and of buying those souls with his money, which Christ Jesus had a preemption of, and had bought them before with his blood: he shall find the hand of God in adversity, and love it, because it shall deliver him; he shall

[52] Psalm lxxxiii. [53] Psalm lxxvii. [54] Habak. iii. 16.
[55] Isaiah xxi. 10. [56] Rev. xiv. 17. [57] Psalm xi. 6.

find his hand in prosperity, and be afraid of it, because that prosperity hath before, and may again lead him into temptations.

To end all; all this, the Holy Ghost, by the pen of David, seals with the last word of this text, *selah*. A word of uncertain sense, and signification; for the Jews themselves do not know exactly, and certainly what it signifies; but deriving this *selah*, from *selal*, which signifies *Attollere*, *To lift up*, they think it to be but a musical note, for the raising of the voice, at that part of the Psalm, where that word is used; as, indeed the word is never used in the Bible, but in the Psalms, and twice in one chapter, in the prophet Habakkuk[56], which is a musical, a metrical chapter. In the Latin translation, and in the Arabic translation of the Psalms it is clean left out, because they were not sure how to translate it aright. But, to speak upon the best grounds in the grammar of that language, and upon best authority too, the word signifies a vehement, a pathetical, a hyperbolical asseveration, and attestation, and ratification of something said before. Such, in a proportion, as our Saviour's *Amen*, *Amen* is, *Verily, verily I say unto you;* such, as St. Paul's *fidelis sermo*, with which he seals so many truths, is, *This is a faithful saying;* such, as that apostle's *Coram Domino* is, with which he ratifies many things, *Before the Lord I speak it;* and such, as Moses' *Vivo ego*, and *Vivit Dominus*, *As I live saith the Lord*, and *As the Lord liveth*. And therefore, though God be in all his words, *yea, and amen*, no word of his can perish in itself, nor should perish in us, that is, pass without observation, yet, in setting this seal of *selah* to this doctrine, he hath testified his will that he would have all these things the better understood, and the deeplier imprinted, that if a man conceal and smother his sins, *selah*, assuredly, God will open that man's mouth, and it shall not show forth his praise, but God will bring him, *ad rugitum*, to fearful exclamations out of the sense of the affliction, if not of the sin; *selah*, assuredly, God will shiver his bones, shake his best actions, and discover their impurity; *selah*, assuredly, God will suffer to be dried up all his moisture, all possibility of repentant tears, and all interest in the blood of Christ Jesus; *selah*, assuredly, God's hand shall be heavy upon

[56] Hab. iii. 3 & 9.

him, and he shall not discern it to be his hand, but shall attribute all to false causes, and so place all his comfort in false remedies; he shall leave out God all day, and God shall leave out him all night, all his everlasting night, in which he shall never see day more. *Selah*, Assuredly, verily, amen, *Fidelis sermo*, This is a faithful, an infallible truth, *Coram Domino*, Before the Lord, *Vivit Dominus*, As the Lord liveth, as Moses, as Christ, as St. Paul testify their, David testifies his doctrine, all between God and man is conditional, and where man will not be bound, God will not be bound neither; if man invest a habit and purpose of sinning, God will study a judgment against that man, and do that, even in Israel, which shall make all our ears to tingle[59], and all our hearts to ache; till that man repent, God will not, and when he does, God will repent too; for, though God be not man, that he can repent, yet that God, who for man's sake became man, for our sakes, and his own glory, will so far become man again, as upon man's true repentance, to repent the judgments intended against that man.

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## SERMON LVI.

### *PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

### PSALM XXXII. 5.

**I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.**

THIS is the sacrament of confession; so we may call it in a safe meaning; that is, the mystery of confession: for true confession is a mysterious art. As there is a *mystery of iniquity*[1], so there is a *mystery of the kingdom of heaven*[2]. And the mystery of the kingdom of heaven is this, That no man comes thither, but in a

[59] 1 Sam. iii. 11.

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 7. [2] Matt. xxii. 1.

sort as he is a notorious sinner. One mystery of iniquity is, that in this world, though I multiply sins, yet the judge cannot punish me, if I can hide them from other men, though he know them; but if I confess them, he can, he will, he must. The mystery of the kingdom of heaven, is, that only the declaring, the publishing, the notifying, and confessing of my sins, possesses me of the kingdom of heaven; there is a case, in which the notoriety of my sins does harm; when my open sinning, or my publishing of my sin, by way of glory in that sin, casts a scandal upon others, and leads them into temptation; for so, my sin becomes theirs, because they sin my sin by example, and their sin becomes mine, because I gave the example, and we aggravate one another's sin, and both sin both. But there is a publication of sin, that both alleviates, nay annihilates my sin, and makes him that hates sin, Almighty God, love me the better, for knowing me to be such a sinner, than if I had not told him of it. Therefore do we speak of the mystery of confession; for it is not delivered in one rule, nor practised in one act.

In this confession of David's, (*I acknowledged my sin unto thee*, &c.) We shall see more than so; for, though our two parts be but the two acts, David's act, and God's act, confession and absolution, yet is there more than one single action to be considered in each of them. For first, in the first, there is a reflected act, that David doth upon himself, before he come to his confession to God; something David had done, before he came to say, *I will confess*, as he did *confess*, before God *forgave the iniquity of his sin*. Now that which he did in himself, and which preceded his confession to God, was the *Notum feci*, *I acknowledged my sin*; which was not his bringing it to the knowledge of God by way of confession, for, (as you see by the method of the Holy Ghost, in the frame of the text) it preceded his purpose of confessing, but it was the taking knowledge of his sin in himself, it was his first quickening, and inanimation, that grace gave his soul, as the soul gives the child in the mother's womb. And then in David's act upon himself, follows the *Non operui*, *I have not hid mine iniquity*, none of mine iniquities from mine own sight: I have displayed to myself, anatomized mine own conscience, left no corner unsearched, I am come to a perfect understanding of mine

own case, *non operui*, this is David's act upon himself, the recalling, and recollecting of his sins, in his own memory. And then finding the number, the weight, and so, the oppression of those sins there, he considers where he may discharge himself of them; and *dixi*, says David, which is a word that implies both deliberation, and resolution, and execution too; I thought what was best to do, and I resolved upon this, and I did it; *Dixi confitebor*, That I would make a true, a full, a hearty confession to God of all those sins; for such we see the elements and the extent of his confession to be; he will confess *Peccata*, Transgressions, Sins; neither by an over-tenderness, and diffidence, and scrupulosity, to call things sins, that are not so, nor by indulgent flattering, and sparing of himself, to forbear those things which are truly so; he will confess *Peccata*, *Sins*, and *Peccata sua*, *His sins;* First, *Sua*, that is, *A se perpetrata*, He will acknowledge them to have proceeded, and to have been committed by himself, he will not impute them to any other cause, least of all to God; and then, *sua*, *non aliena*, he will confess sins that are his own sins, and not meddle with the sins of other men, that appertain not to him. This is the subject of his confession, *sins*, and *his sins*, and then, *Peccata sua Domino*, *His sins unto the Lord*, both in that consideration, that all sins are committed against the Lord, and in that also, that confession of all sins is to be made unto the Lord; and lastly, all this, (as St. Hierome reads this text, and so also did our former translation) *Adversum se*, *Against himself*, that is, without any hope of relief, or reparation in himself. He begins to think of his own sinful state, and he proceeds to a particular inquisition upon his conscience, there is his preparation, Then he considers, and thereupon resolves, and thereupon proceeds to confess things that are truly sins, and then all them as his own, without imputing them to others, if they be his own, without meddling with others, and these to the Lord, against whom all sin is committed, and to whom all confession is to be directed; and all this still against himself, without any hope from himself. All this is in David's action, preparatorily in himself, and then declaratorily towards God, and do but make up our first part.

In the other, which is God's act towards David, the absolu-

tion, the remission, the forgiveness, we shall consider first the fulness; for, it is both of the sin, and the punishment of the sin, for the word imports both, and our two translations have expressed it between them, for that which one translation calls the *iniquity of the sin*, the other calls *the punishment;* and then we shall consider the seasonableness, the speed, the acceleration of God's mercy, in the absolution, for in David it is but *actus inchoatus*, and *actus consummatus* in God, David did but say, I will confess, and God forgave the iniquity, and the punishment of his sin. Now as this distribution is paraphrase enough upon the text, so a little larger paraphrase upon every piece of the paraphrase, will be as much as will fall into this exercise. For, as you see, the branches are many, and full of fruit, and I can but shake them, and leave every one to gather his own portion, to apply those notes, which may most advance his edification.

First then in this mystery of confession, we consider David's reflected act, his preparatory act, preceding his confession to God, and transacted in himself, of which the first motion is, the *notum feci*, I acknowledged in myself, I came to a feeling in myself, what my sinful condition was. This is our quickening in our regeneration, and second birth; and till this come, a sinner lies as the chaos in the beginning of the creation, before the *Spirit of God had moved upon the face of the waters*, *dark*, and *void*, and *without form;* he lies, as we may conceive, out of the authors of natural story, the slime and mud of the river Nilus to lie, before the sun-beams strike upon it; which after, by the heat of those beams, produces several shapes, and forms of creatures. So till this first beam of grace, which we consider here, strike upon the soul of a sinner, he lies in the mud and slime, in the dregs and lees, and tartar of his sin. He cannot so much as wish, that that sun would shine upon him, he doth not so much as know, that there is such a sun, that hath that influence, and impression; but if this first beam of grace enlighten him to himself, reflect him upon himself, *notum facit*, (as the text says) if it acquaint him with himself, then, as the creatures in the creation, then, as the new creatures at Nilus, his sins begin to take their forms, and their specifications, and they appear to him in their particular true shapes, and that which he hath in a general name, called

pleasure or wantonness, now calls itself in his conscience, a direct adultery, a direct incest; and that which he hath called frugality, and providence for family and posterity, tells him plainly, My name is Oppression, and I am the spirit of covetousness. Many times men fall into company, and accompany others to houses of riot and uncleanness, and do not so much as know their sinful companions' names; nay they do not so much as know the names of the sins that they commit, nor those circumstances in those sins, which vary the very name and nature of the sin.

But then, *Oculos, quos culpa claudit, pœna aperit*[3], Those eyes, which sin shut, this first beam of grace opens, when it comes, and works effectually upon us; till this season of grace, this sinner is blind to the sun, and deaf to thunder. *A wild ass, that is used to the wilderness, and snuffeth up wind at her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn her away*[4]? An habitual sinner, that doth not stumble, but tumble, as a mighty stone down a hill, in the ways of his sin, in his occasion, who can turn him? In his rage of sin, what law can withhold him? But says the prophet there, of that wild ass, *All they that seek her, will not weary themselves;* friends, magistrates, preachers, do but weary themselves, and lose their labour, in endeavouring to reclaim that sinner; *but in her month they shall find her*, says the prophet; that is, say our expositors, when she is great and unwieldy. Some such month, God of his goodness brings upon this sinner; some sickness, some judgment stops him, and then we find him; God by his ordinance, executed by us, brings him to this *notum feci*, into company with himself, into an acquaintance and conversation with himself, and he sees his sins look with other faces, and he hears his sins speak with other voices, and he finds them to call one another by other names: and when he is thus come to that consideration, Lord! how have I mistaken myself, am I, that thought myself, and passed with others, for a sociable, a pleasurable man, and good company; am I a leprous adulterer, is that my name? Am I, that thought myself a frugal man, and a good husband; I, whom fathers would recommend to their children, and say, Mark how he spares, how he grows up, how he gathers, am I an oppressing extortioner, is that my name? Blessed be

[3] Gregory. [4] Jer. ii. 24.

thy name, O Lord, that hast brought me to this *notum feci*, to know mine own name, mine own miserable condition; he will also say, May that blessing of thine enlarge itself farther, that as I am come to this *notum feci*, to know that I mistook myself all this while, so I may proceed to the *non operui*, to a perfect sifting of my conscience, in all corners: which is David's second motion in his act of preparation, and our next consideration, *I acknowledged my sin*, and I hid none, disguised none, *non operui*.

Sometimes the magistrate is informed of an abuse, and yet proceeds to no farther search, nor inquisition. This word implies a sifting of the conscience. He doth not only take knowledge of his sins, than when they discover themselves; of his riot and voluptuousness, than when he burns in a fever occasioned by his surfeits; nor of his licentiousness, than when he is under the anguish and smart of corrosives; nor of his wastefulness and pride, than when he is laid in prison for debt: he doth not seek his sins in his belly, nor in his bones, nor in his purse, but in his conscience, and he unfolds that, rips up that, and enters into the privatest, and most remote corners thereof. And there is much more in this negative circumstance, *non operui*, I hid nothing, than in the former acknowledgment, *notum feci*, I took knowledge of my sins. When they sent to sift John Baptist, whether he were *the Christ*, because he was willing to give them all satisfaction, he expressed himself so, *He confessed, and denied not, and said, I am not the Christ*[5]. So when Joshua pressed Achan, to confess his trespass, he presses him with this negative addition, *Show me what thou hast done, and hide it not*[6]; that is, disguise nothing that belongs to it. For, the better to imprint a confidence, and to remove all suspicion, men to their masters, wives to their husbands, will confess something, but yet *operiunt*, they hide more. Those words, *In multitudine virtutis tuæ, Through the greatness of thy power, thine enemies shall submit*[7], St. Jerome, and the Septuagint before, and Tremellius after, and all that bind themselves to the Hebrew letter, read it thus, *Mentientur tibi inimici tui*, when thy power is showed upon them, when thy hand lies upon them, *thine enemies will lie unto thee*, they will

[5] John i. 20. [6] Josh. vii. 19. [7] Psalm LXVI. 3.

counterfeit a confession, they will acknowledge some sins, but yet *operiunt*, they hide, they cover others. Saul in the defeat of the Amalekites reserved some of the fattest of the spoil[s], and being deprehended, and reprehended, he said he intended it for sacrifice: many times, men in great place, abuse their own souls with that imagination, or palliation, that they do God good service in some sin, and that they should more hurt the cause of God, if they should proceed earnestly to the punishment of those that oppose it, than if they let them alone, and so leave laws unexecuted, and God's truth endangered. But David's issue was, *non iniquitas, non operui*, I left none iniquity unsearched, I hid none.

But anything serves us, for a cover of sin, even from a net, that every man sees through, to such a cloud of darkness, as none but the prince of darkness, that cast that cloud upon us, can see us in it, nor we see ourselves. That we should hide lesser sins with greater, is not so strange; that in an adultery, we should forget the circumstances in it, and the practices to come to it. But we hide greater sins with lesser, with a manifold, and multiplied throng and cloud of lesser sins, all comes to an indifferency, and so we see not great sins. Easiness of conversation in a woman, seems no great harm; adorning themselves to please those with whom they converse, is not much more; to hear them, whom they are thus willing to please, praise them, and magnify their perfections, is little more than that; to allow them to sue, and solicit for the possession of that which they have so much praised, is not much more neither; nor will it seem much at last, to give them possession of that they sue for; nay it will seem a kind of injustice to deny it them. We hide lesser sins with greater, greater with lesser; nay we hide the devil with God, we hide all the week's sins with a Sabbath's solemnity; and as in the Roman church, they poisoned God, (when they had made their *bread* God, they poisoned the emperor with that bread) so this is a possessing of God, a making the devil to enter into God, when we hide our sins with an outward sanctity, and call God to witness and testify to the congregation, that we are saints, when we are devils; for this is a suborning of God, and a drawing of God into a perjury. We hide our sins in his house, by hypo-

[s] 1 Sam. xv.

crisy. all our lives. and we hide them at our deaths, perchance with an hospital. And truly we had need do so, when we have impoverished God. in his children, by our extortions, and wounded him. and lamed him. in them, by our oppressions, we had need provide God an hospital. As men that rob houses thrust in a child at the window. and he opens greater doors for them, so lesser sins make way for greater. *De minimis non curat lex*, The law is fain to pass over small faults; but *De minimis curat lux*, That light of grace, by which a sinner disposes himself to confession, must discover every sin, and hide none, suffer none to hide itself, nor lie hidden under others. When God speaks so much of Behemoth. and Leviathan[9], the great land and sea oppressors, he calls us to the consideration of the insupportableness of great sins; but in the plains of Egypt by *hail*, and *locusts*, and *lice*, little and contemptible things, he calls us to the consideration of these vermin of the soul, lesser and unconsidered sins. David had not accomplished his work upon himself, his reflected, his preparatory act, till he had made both those steps, *notum feci, non operui*, first I took knowledge of my sinful condition, and then I proceeded to a particular inquisition of my conscience, *I took knowledge of my sin, and mine iniquity I have not hid*, and then he was fit to think of an access to God, by confession, *Dixi confitebor*, &c.

This word, *Dixi, amar, I said*, is a word that implies first meditation, deliberation, considering, and then upon such meditation, a resolution too, and execution after all. When it is said of God, *dixit*, and *dixit*, God said this, and said that, in the first creation, *Cave ne cogites strepitum*[10], Do not think that God uttered any sound; his speaking was inward, his speaking was thinking. So David uses this word in the person of another, *Dixit insipiens, The fool hath said*, that is, *in corde, said in his heart*, that is, thought *that there is no God*[11] There speaking is thinking; and speaking is resolving too. So David's son Solomon uses the word, *Behold, I purpose to build a house unto the Lord*[12], where the word is, *I say*, I will do it, speaking is determining; and speaking is executing too, *Dixi custodiam, I said I will take*

[9] Job xl. & xli.
[10] Basil.
[11] Psalm xiv. 1.
[12] 1 Kings v. 5.

*heed to my ways*[13], that is, I will proceed and go forward in the paths of God. And such a premeditation, such a preconsideration, do all our approaches, and accesses to God, and all our acts in his service require. God is the rock of our salvation, God is no occasional God, no accidental God; neither will God be served by occasion, nor by accident, but by a constant devotion. Our communication with God must not be in interjections; that come in by chance; nor our devotions made up of parenthesis, that might be left out. They err equally, that made a God of necessity, and that made a God of contingency: they that with the Manichees, make an ill God, a God that forces men to do all the ill that they do, and they that with the Epicures, make an idle God, an indifferent God, that cares not what is done; God is not destiny; then there could be no reward, nor punishment; but God is not fortune neither, for then there were no Providence. If God have given reason only to man, it were strange that man should exercise that reason, in all his moral and civil actions, and only do the acts of God's worship casually; to go to court, to Westminster, to the exchange, for ends, and to come to church, by chance, or for company, or for some collateral respects, that have no relation to God, not to think of our confession, till the priest have called upon us, to say after him, *We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep*, to come for absolution, as Nebuchadnezzar came to Daniel[14], for the interpretation of his dream, who did not only not understand his dream, but not remember it, *Somnium ejus fugit ab eo*, He did not only not know what his dream meant, but he did not know what his dream was, not to consider the nature of confession, and absolution, not to consider the nature of the sins we should confess, and be absolved of, is a stupidity against David's practice here; *dixit*, he said, he meditated, he considered, God's service is no extemporal thing. But then *dixit*, he resolved too, for so the word signifies, consideration, but resolution upon it; and then, that he resolved, he executed.

This is not only David's *dixit in corde*, where speaking is thinking, nor only Solomon's *dixi ædificabo*, I resolved how I might build, but it is also the prodigal's *dixi revertar*, *I said I*

[13] Psal. xxxix. 1. [14] Dan. ii. 3.

*will go to my father*[15], a resolving and executing of that resolution for that, that execution crowns all. How many think to come hither, when they wake, and are not ready when the hour comes? And even this morning's omission is an abridgment, or an essay of their whole lives, they think to repent every day, and are not ready when the bell tolls. It is well said of God's speaking, in the Creation, it was *Dictio practica, definitiva, imperativa*[16], It was an actual speaking, a definitive, an imperative speaking; and, *Dicto absolvit negotium*[17], His saying he would do it, that is, his meaning to do it, was the very doing of it. Our religious duties require meditations, for God is no extemporal God; those produce determinations, for God must not be held in suspense; and they flow into executions, for God is not an illusible God, to be carried with promises, or purposes only; and all those links of this religious chain, consideration, resolution, execution, thought, word, and practice, are made out of this golden word, *Amar, dixi*, I said I will do it. And then, *Dixi confitebor*, I considered that my best way was to confess, and I resolved to do so, and I did it; *Dixi confitebor.*

It is but a homely metaphor, but it is a wholesome, and a useful one, *Confessio vomitus*[18], Confession works as a vomit; it shakes the frame, and it breaks the bed of sin; and it is an ease to the spiritual stomach, to the conscience, to be thereby disburdened. It is an ease to the sinner, to the patient; but that that makes it absolutely necessary, is that it is a glory to God; for in all my spiritual actions, appreciations, or deprecations, whether I pray for benefits, or against calamities, still my Alpha, and Omega, my first and last motive, must be the glory of God. Therefore Joshua says to Achan, *My son, give I pray thee, glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him*[19]. Now, the glory of God arises not out of the confessing; but because every true confessing is accompanied with a detestation of the sin, as it hath separated me from God, and a sense of my reunion, and redintegration with God, in the abjuration of my former sins, (for, to tell my sin by way of a good tale, or by boasting in it, though it be a revealing, a manifesting, is not a confession) in every true confession God hath

[15] Luke xv. 12. [16] Cajetan. [17] Ambrose.
[18] Origen. [19] Josh. vii. 19.

glory, because he hath a strayed soul, re-united to his kingdom. And to advance this glory, David confesses *peccata*, sins, which is our next consideration, *I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord.*

First he resents his state, all is not well; then he examines himself, thus and thus it stands with me; then he considers, then he resolves, then he executes, he confesses, (so far we are gone) and now he confesses sins. For, the Pharisees, (though he pretended a confession) was rather an exprobration, how much God had been beholden to him, for his Sabbaths, for his alms, for his tythes, for his fasting. David confesses sins; first, such things as were truly sins. For, as the element of air, that lies between the water, and the fire, is sometimes condensed into water, sometimes rarefied into fire: so lies the conscience of man between two operations of the devil; sometimes he rarefies it, evaporates it, that it apprehends nothing, feels nothing to be sin, sometimes he condenses it, that everything falls and sticks upon it, in the nature, and takes the weight of sin, and he misinterprets the indifferent actions of others, and of his own, and destroys all use of Christian liberty, all conversation, all recreation, and out of a false fear, of being undutiful to God, is unjust to all the world, and to his own soul, and consequently to God himself, who, of all notions, would not be received in the notion of a cruel, or tyrannical God. In an obdurate conscience that feels no sin, the devil glories most, but in the over-tender conscience he practises most; that is his triumphant, but this is his militant church; that is his Sabbath, but this is his six days' labour; in the obdurate he hath induced a security, in the scrupulous and over-tender he is working for desperation. There are few things in the Scriptures, which the Holy Ghost hath expressed in so many names, as sin; *sin*, *wickedness*, *iniquity*, *transgressions*, *offences*, many, many more; and all this, that thereby we might reflect upon ourselves often, and see if our particular actions fell not under some of those names; but then, lest this should over-intimidate us, there are as many names given by the Holy Ghost, to the law of God; *law*, *statutes*, *ordinances*, *covenants*, *testimony*, *precept*, and all the rest, of which there is some one at least, repeated in every verse of the hundredth and nineteenth Psalm; that thereby we might still have a rule to measure,

and try our actions by, whether they be sins or no. For, as the apostle says, *He had not known sin, if he had not known the law;* so there had been no sin, if there had been no law. And therefore that soul that feels itself oppressed under the burden of a vow, must have recourse to the law of God, and see whether that vow fall under the rule of that law; for as an over-tender conscience may call things sins, that are not, and so be afraid of things that never were, so may it also of things that were, but are not now; of such sins as were truly sins, and fearful sins, but are now dead, dead by a true repentance, and buried in the sea of the blood of Christ Jesus, and sealed up in that monument, under the seal of reconciliation, the blessed Sacrament, and yet rise sometimes in this tender conscience, in a suspicion and jealousy, that God hath not truly, not fully forgiven them. And as a ghost, which we think we see, affrights us more than an army that we do see: so these apparitions of sins, of things that are not against any law of God, and so are not sins, or sins that are dead in a true repentance, and so have no being at all, by the Devil's practice work dangerously upon a distempered conscience; for, as God hath given the soul an imagination, and a fancy, as well as an understanding, so the devil imprints in the conscience, a false imagination, as well as a fearful sense of true sin. David confesses sins, sins that were truly sins.

But the more ordinary danger is, in our not calling those things which are truly sins, by that name. For, as sometimes when the baptism of a child is deferred for state, the child dies unbaptized: so the sinner defers the baptism of his sin, in his tears, and in the blood of his Saviour, offered in the blessed Sacrament, till he die nameless, nameless in the Book of life. It is a character, that one of the ancientest poets gives of a well-bred, and well-governed gentleman, that he would not tell such lies as were like truths, not probable lies; nor such truths as were like lies, not wonderful, not incredible truths; it is the constancy of a rectified Christian, not to call his indifferent actions sins, for that is to slander God, as a cruel God; nor to call sins indifferent actions, for that is to undervalue God, as a negligent God. God doth not keep the conscience of man upon the rack, in a continual torture and stretching; but God doth not stupify the con-

science with an opiate, in an insensibleness of any sin. The law of God is the balance, and the *criterium;* by that try thine actions, and then confess; David did so; *peccata*, he confessed sins; nothing, that was not so, as such; neither omitted he anything, that was so. And then they were *peccata sua*, his sins, *I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord.*

First, *sua, his sins*, that is, *à se perpetrata*, sins which he confesses to have been of his voluntary committing; he might, and did not avoid them. When Adam said, by way of alienation, and transferring his fault, *The woman whom thou gavest me;* and the woman said, *The serpent deceived me*[20]; God took this, by way of information to find out the principal, but not by way of extenuation, or alleviation of their faults; every Adam eats with as much sweat of his brows, and every Eve brings forth her children with as much pain in her travail, as if there had been no serpent in the case. If a man sin against God, who shall plead for him? If a man lay his sins upon the serpent, upon the devil, it is no plea, but if he lay them upon God, it is blasphemy. Job finds some ground of a pious expostulation with God, in that, *My flesh is not brass, nor my strength stones; and such as I am, thou hast made me; why then dost thou set me up as a mark to shoot at?* But Job never hopes for ease, in any such allegation; thou hast made my soul a cistern, and then poured temptations into it; thou hast enfeebled it with denying it thy grace, and then put a giant, a necessity of sinning upon it. My sins are mine own; the sun is no cause of the shadow my body casts, nor God of the sins I commit. David confesses *his sins*, that is, he confesses them to be his; and then he confesses *his*, he meddles not with those that are other men's.

The magistrate and the minister are bound to consider the sins of others; for their sins become *quodammodo nostra*, in some sort ours; if we do not reprove, if the magistrate do not correct those sins. All men are bound to confess, and lament the sins of the people. It was then when Daniel was in that exercise of his devotion, *confessing his sin, and the sin of his people*[21], that he received that comfort from the angel Gabriel; and yet, even then, the first thing that fell under his confession, was his own

[20] Gen. iii. 12. [21] Dan. ix. 20.

sin, *my sin*, and then, *the sin of my people*. When Joseph's brethren came to a sense of that sin, in having sold him, none of them transfers the sin from himself, neither doth any of them discharge any of the rest of that sin; they all take all; *They said to one another*, says that text, *we*, all we, *are verily guilty, and therefore is this distress come upon us*[22], upon us all; national calamities are induced by general sins, and where they fall, we cannot so charge the laity, as to free the clergy, nor so charge the people, as to free the magistrate. But as great sums are raised by little personal contributions; so a little true sorrow from every soul, would make a great sacrifice to God, and a few tears from every eye, a deeper and a safer sea, about this island, than that that doth wall it. Let us therefore never say, that it is *Aliena ambitio*, The immoderate ambition of a pretending monarch, that endangers us, that it is *Aliena perfidia*, The falsehood of perfidious neighbours that hath disappointed us, that it is *Aliena fortuna*, The growth of others who have shot up under our shelter, that may overtop us; they are *peccata nostra*, our own pride, our own wantonness, our own drunkenness, that makes God shut and close his hand towards us, withdraw his former blessings from us, and then strike us with that shut, and closed, and heavy hand, and multiply calamities upon us. What a parliament meets at this hour in this kingdom? How many such committees as this? how many such congregations stand, as we do here, in the presence of God, at this hour? And what a subsidy should this state receive, and what a sacrifice should God receive, if every particular man would but depart with his own beloved sin? We dispute what is our own, as though we would but know what to give. Alas, our sins are our own, let us give them. Our sins are our own: that we confess; and we confess them, according to David's method, *Domino*, to the Lord; *I will confess my sins to the Lord.*

After he had deliberated, and resolved upon his course, what he would do, he never stayed upon the person, to whom; his way being confession, he stayed not long in seeking his ghostly Father, his confessor, *confitebor Domino.* And first, *peccata Domino*, that his sins were sins against the Lord. For, as every

[22] Gen. xlii. 21.

sin is a violation of a law, so every violation of a law reflects upon the law-maker. It is the same offence to coin a penny, and a piece; the same to counterfeit the seal of a subpœna, as of a pardon. The second table was writ by the hand of God, as well as the first; and the majesty of God, as he is the lawgiver, is wounded in an adultery, and a theft, as well as in an idolatry, or a blasphemy. It is not enough to consider the deformity and the foulness of an action so, as that an honest man would not have done it; but so as it violates a law of God, and his majesty in that law. The shame of men, is one bridle, that is cast upon us. It is a moral obduration, and in the suburbs, next door to a spiritual obduration, to be voice-proof, censure-proof, not to be afraid, nor ashamed, what the world says. He that relies upon his *Plaudo domi*, Though the world hiss, I give myself a plaudit at home, I have him at my table, and her in my bed, whom I would have, and I care not for rumour; he that rests in such a plaudit, prepares for a tragedy, a tragedy in the amphitheatre, the double theatre, this world, and the next too. Even the shame of the world should be one, one bridle, but the strongest is the other, *Peccata Domino*, To consider that every sin is a violation of the majesty of God.

And then *Confitebor Domino*, says David, *I will confess my sins to the Lord;* sins are not confessed, if they be not confessed to him; and if they be confessed to him, in case of necessity it will suffice, though they be confessed to no other. Indeed, a confession is directed upon God, though it be made to his minister: if God had appointed his angels, or his saints to absolve me, as he hath his ministers, I would confess to them. Joshua took not the jurisdiction out of God's hands, when he said to Achan, *Give glory unto the God of Israel, in making thy confession to him; and tell me now, what thou hast done, and hide it not from me.* The law of the leper is, *That he shall be brought unto the priest*[28]; men come not willingly to this manifestation of themselves; nor are they to be brought in chains, as they do in the Roman church, by a necessity of an exact enumeration of all their sins: but to be led with that sweetness, with which our church proceeds, in appointing sick persons, if they feel their consciences

[28] Levit. xiv. 2.

troubled with any weighty matter, to make a special confession, and to receive absolution at the hands of the priest; and then to be remembered, that every coming to the communion, is as serious a thing as our transmigration out of this world, and we should do as much here, for the settling of our conscience, as upon our death-bed; and to be remembered also, that none of all the reformed churches have forbidden confession, though some practise it less than others. If I submit a cause to the arbitrement of any man, to end it, *Secundum voluntatem*, says the law, How he will, yet still *Arbitrium est arbitrium boni viri*, His will must be regulated by the rules of common honesty, and general equity. So when we lead men to this holy ease of discharging their heavy spirits, by such private confessions, yet this is still limited by the law of God, so far as God hath instituted this power by his Gospel, in his church, and far from inducing amongst us, that torture of the conscience, that usurpation of God's power, that spying into the counsels of princes, and supplanting of their purposes, with which the church of Rome hath been deeply charged.

And this useful and unmisinterpretable confession, which we speak of, is the more recommended to us, in that with which David shuts up his act, (as out of St. Hierome, and out of our former translation, we intimated unto you) that he doth all this *Adversum se, I will confess my sins unto the Lord, against myself;* the more I find confession, or any religious practice, to be against myself, and repugnant to mine own nature, the farther I will go in it. For, still the *Adversum me*, is *Cum Deo;* The more I say against myself, the more I vilify myself, the more I glorify my God. As St. Chrysostom says, every man is *Spontaneus Satan*, a Satan to himself, as Satan is a tempter, every man can tempt himself; so I will be *Spontaneus Satan*, as Satan is an accuser, an adversary, I will accuse myself. I consider often that passionate humiliation of St. Peter, *Exi à me Domine, He fell at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*[21]; and I am often ready to say so, and more; depart from me, O Lord, for I am sinful enough to infect thee; as I may persecute thee in thy children, so I may infect thee in thine

[21] Luke v. 8.

ordinances; depart, in withdrawing thy word from me, for I am corrupt enough to make even thy saving Gospel, the savour of death unto death; depart, in withholding thy sacrament, for I am leprous enough to taint thy flesh, and to make the balm of thy blood, poison to my soul; depart, in withdrawing the protection of thine angels from me, for I am vicious enough to imprint corruption and rebellion into their nature. And if I be too foul for God himself to come near me, for his ordinances to work upon me, I am no companion for myself, I must not be alone with myself; for I am as apt to take, as to give infection; I am a reciprocal plague; passively and actively contagious; I breathe corruption, and breathe it upon myself; and I am the Babylon that I must go out of, or I perish. I am not only under Jacob's *Non dignus, Not worthy the least of all thy mercies*[25]; nor only under the centurion's *Non dignus, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof*[26], that thy spirit should ever speak to my spirit, (which was the form of words, in which every communicant received the sacrament, in the primitive church, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof;*) nor only under the prodigal's *Non dignus, Not worthy to be called thy son*[27]; neither in the filiation of adoption, for I have deserved to be disinherited; nor in the filiation of creation, for I have deserved to be annihilated; but *Non dignus procumbere*[28], I am not worthy to stoop down, to fall down, to kneel before thee, in thy minister, the almoner of thy mercy, the treasurer of thine absolutions. So far do I confess *adversum me*, against myself, as that I confess, I am not worthy to confess, nor to be admitted to any access, any approach to thee, much less to an act, so near reconciliation to thee, as an accusation of myself, or so near thy acquitting, as a self-condemning. Be this the issue in all controversies, whensoever any new opinions distract us, be that still thought best, that is most *adversum nos*, most against ourselves; that that most lays flat the nature of man, so it take it not quite away, and blast all virtuous endeavours; that that most exalts the grace and glory of God, be that the truth; and so have you the whole mystery of David's confession, in both his acts; pre-

[25] Gen. xxxii. 10. [26] Matt. viii. 8.
[27] Luke xv. 21. [28] Mark i. 7.

paratory, in resenting his sinful condition in general, and surveying his conscience in particular; and then his deliberation, his resolution, his execution, his confession; confession of true sins, and of them only, and of all them, of his sins, and all this to the Lord, and all that against himself. That which was proposed for the second part, must fall into the compass of a conclusion, and a short one, that is God's act, *Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

This is a wide door, and would let out armies of instructions to you; but we will shut up this door, with these two leaves thereof, the fulness of God's mercy, *He forgives the sin and the punishment;* and the seasonableness, the acceleration of his mercy, in this expression in our text, that David's is but *actus inchoatus*, he says *he will confess*, and God's is *Actus consummatus*, *Thou forgavest*, thou hadst already forgiven the iniquity, and punishment of my sin. These will be the two leaves of this door; and let the hand that shuts them be this *and*, this particle of connexion which we have in the text, *I said, and thou didst.* For though this remission of sin be not presented here as an effect upon that cause of David's confession, (it is not delivered in a *quia*, and an *ergo*, because David did this, God did that; for man's will leads not the will of God, as a cause, who does all his acts of mercy for his mercy's sake) yet though it be not an effect, as from a cause, yet it is at least as a consequent from an occasion, so assured, so infallible, as let any man confess as David did, and he shall be sure to be forgiven as David was. For though this forgiveness be a flower of mercy, yet the root grows in the justice of God; if we acknowledge our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin[29]; it grows out of his faithfulness, as he hath vouchsafed to bind himself by a promise, and out of his justice, as he hath received a full satisfaction for all our sins. So that this hand, this *and*, in our text, is as a ligament, as a sinew, to connect and knit together that glorious body of God's preventing grace, and his subsequent grace; if our confession come between and tie the knot, God, that moved us to that act, will perfect all.

Here enters the fulness of his mercy, at one leaf of this door;

[29] 1 John i. 9.

well expressed at our door, in that *Ecce sto, et pulso*[30], Behold, I stand at the door and knock; for, first he comes; here is no mention of our calling of him before; he comes of himself; and then he suffers not us to be ignorant of his coming, he comes so, as that he manifests himself, *Ecce*, Behold; and then he expects not that we should wake with that light, and look out of ourselves, but he knocks, solicits us, at least, with some noise at our doors, some calamities upon our neighbours; and again he appears not like a lightning that passes away as soon as it is seen, that no man can read by it, nor work by it, nor light a candle, nor kindle a coal by it, but he stands at the door, and expects us; all day; not only with a patience, but with a hunger to effect his purpose upon us, he would come in, and sup with us, accept our diet, our poor endeavours; and then, would have us sup with him, (as it is there added) would feast us with his abundant graces, which he brings even home to our doors; but those he does not give us at the door; not till we have let him in, by the good use of his former grace; and as he offers this fulness of his mercy, by these means before, so by way of pardon, and remission, if we have been defective in opening the door upon his standing and knocking, this fulness is fully expressed in this word of this text, as our two translations, (neither departing from the natural signification of the word) have rendered it.

The word is the same here, in David's sweetness, as in Cain's bitterness, *gnavon;* and we cannot tell, whether Cain speak there of a punishment too great to be borne, or of a sin too great to be pardoned[31]; nor which David means here; it fills up the measure of God's mercy, if we take him to mean both. God, upon confession, forgives the punishment of the sin; so that the just terror of hell, and the imaginary terror of purgatory, for the next world, is taken away; and for this world, what calamities and tribulations soever fall upon us, after these confessions, and remissions, they have not the nature of punishments, but they are fatherly corrections, and medicinal assistances, against relapses, and have their main relation and prospect upon the future.

For not only the sin itself, but the iniquity of the sin, is said to be forgiven; God keeps nothing in his mind against the last

[30] Rev. iii. 20. [31] Gen. iv. 13.

day; but whatsoever is worst in the sin, the venom, the malignity of the sin, the violation of his law, the affrontings of his majesty residing in that law, though it have been a winking at his light, a resisting of his light, the ill nature, the malignity, the iniquity of the sin is forgiven. Only this remains, that God extinguishes not the right of a third person, nor pardons a murder so, as that he bars another from his appeal: not that his pardon is not full, upon a full confession, but that the confession is no more full, if it be not accompanied with satisfaction, that is, restitution of all unjustly gotten, than if the confession lacked contrition, and true sorrow. Otherwise the iniquity of the sin, and the punishment of the sin, are both fully pardoned. And so we have shut one leaf of this door, the fulness; the other is the speed, and acceleration of his mercy, and that leaf we will clap to, in a word.

This is expressed in this, David is but at his *dixit*, and God at his *remisit;* David was but saying, nay, but thinking, and God was doing, nay perfecting his work. To the lepers that cried out for mercy, Christ said, Go, show yourselves to the priest[22]; so he put them into the way; and they went, says the text; and as they went, they were healed upon the way. No man comes into the way, but by the illumination, and direction of God, Christ put them into the way. The way is the church; no man is cured out of the way; no man that separates himself from the church; nor in the way neither, except he go; if he live negligently, and trust only upon the outward profession; nor though he go, except he go according to Christ bidding; except he conform himself to that worship of God, and to those means of sanctification, which God hath instituted in his church, without singularities of his own, or traditions of other men's inventing, and imposing. This, this submitting, and conforming ourselves to God, so as God hath commanded us, the purposing of this, and the endeavouring of this, is our *dixit* in the text, our saying that we will do it, and upon this *dixit*, this purposing, this endeavouring, instantly, immediately, infallibly follows the *remisit*, God will, God does, God hath forgiven, the iniquity, and the punishment of the sin.

[22] Luke xvii. 11.

Therefore to end all, *Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord.* No liquor comes so clearly, so absolutely from the vessel, not oil, not milk, not wine, not honey, as that it leaves no taste behind; so may sweet sins; and therefore pour out, says the prophet, not the liquor, but the heart itself, and take a new heart of God's making; for thy former heart was never so of God's making, as that Adam had not a hand in it; and his image was in it, in original sin, as well as God's in the creation. As liquors poured out leave a taste and a smell behind them, imperfected confessions (and who perfects his confession?) leave ill gotten goods sticking upon thine heir, and they leave a taste, and a delight to think, and speak of former sins, sticking upon thyself; but pour out thy heart like water; all ill impressions in the very root. And for the accomplishment of this great mystery of godliness by confession, fix thy meditations upon those words, and in the strength of them, come now, (or when thou shalt be better strengthened by the meditation of them) to the table of the Lord, the Lord looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned[33], and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not, he will deliver his soul from going down into the pit, and his life shall see light; and it is added, Lo all these things worketh God twice and thrice. Here is a fulness of consolation, first plenary, and here is a present forgiveness; if man, if any man say, I have sinned, God doth, God forgives; and here is more than that, an iteration, if thou fall upon infirmity again, God will on penitence more carefully performed, forgive again. This he will do twice, or thrice, says the Hebrew; our translation might boldly say, as it doth, This God will do often. But yet if God find *dolum in spiritu*, an over-confidence in this, God cannot be mocked; and therefore take heed of trusting upon it too often, but especially of trusting upon it too late. And whatsoever the Holy Ghost may mean by the twice or thrice, be sure to do it once, do it now, and receive thy Saviour there, and so as he offers himself unto thee in these his ordinances this day, once, and twice, and thrice, that is, in prayer, in preaching, in the sacrament. For this is thy Trinity upon earth, that must bring thee to the Trinity in heaven: to which Trinity, &c.

[33] Job xxxiii. 27.

# SERMON LVII.

*PREACHED UPON THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS.*

PSALM xxxii. 6.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

You would not be weary of reading a long conveyance, in which the land were given to yourselves; nor of a long will, in which the body of the estate were bequeathed to you. Be not weary, if at any time your patience be exercised some minutes beyond the threescore, some time beyond the hour in these exercises, for we exhibit the conveyance, in which the land, the land of promise is made yours, and the testament, in which even the testator himself is bequeathed to you. But legacies must be demanded, and oftentimes sued for; and in this text you are directed how to come by it, by prayer, (*For this shall every one, &c.*) and you are encouraged in the suit by the value of that you are to recover, by the effect of prayer, *Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh to him:* and these two, the way and the end, the manner and the matter, prayer and the benefit thereof, will be our two parts. And in the first of these, the duty of prayer, though we be elsewhere commanded *to pray continually*[1], yet for all that continual disposition, we have here certain limitations, or rather indeed preparations, lest that which we call prayer should not be so, and these are four: for first, it is but *omnis sanctus*, every godly man shall pray, for the prayer of the wicked turns to sin; and then the object of prayer, to whom it must be directed, is limited, it is but *ad te*, unto thee he shall pray, beyond him we cannot go, and he that prays short of him, to any on this side of God, falls short in his prayer; and in a third consideration, the subject, the matter of his prayer is limited too, it is but *propter hoc*, for this shall he pray, that is, for that which hath been formerly expressed, not whatsoever our desires, or our

[1] 1 Thess. v. 17.

anguish, and vexation, and impatience presents or suggests to us; and lastly, the time is limited too, *In tempore opportuno*, In a time when thou mayest be found. In these four, we shall determine that first part, the duty; and in the second the reward, the benefit, which is deliverance, (*Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh him*) we shall see first, that the world is *diluvium aquarum*, a deluge of water-floods that threaten all; but yet though worldly calamities be of that spreading, and diffusive, and overflowing nature, *non approximabit*, there are places that it cannot come to, rocks that it cannot shake, hills that it cannot overflow; God hath so erected the goldly man, that he is a *non ultra*, a bank to this sea; it shall not come near him; and this David establishes with that seal of infallibility, Surely, *Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh him*. And these be the steps by which we shall lead you to the greatest happiness, that is, deliverance from all afflictions, and that by the noblest means, and the fairest way, that is, familiar conversation with God by prayer.

Into our first part, the duty of prayer, we shall make our entry with this consideration, That our religious duties, in their precepts, are for the most part accompanied with reasons to induce us to the performance thereof: *Hoc fac et vives;* Do this, says God; do it, because I command it, at least do it, because if thou do it, thou shalt live for ever. And so, *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*[2]; here the reason of the precept is example; others have prospered that way, therefore walk thou in it. God illustrates his precepts, comments upon his own text, much by example. First, to raise us to the best height, God makes himself our example, *Sicut Pater, Be holy as your Father in heaven is holy:* then, because we cannot reach to that, he makes men like ourselves (at least, such as we should be) our example, *Sicut Elias, Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed that it might not rain, and it rained not, and that it might, and it did*[3]. If we be not able to conform ourselves to the singularity of one particular and transcendant man, he sends us to the whole body of good men, his servants, *Sicut prophetæ, Take, my brethren, the prophets,*

[2] Heb. xiii. 2. [3] James v. 27.

*for an example of long patience.* And because he knows our inclination, to be a declination, and that we cast those looks, which he made upward towards him, downward towards the creature, he sends us to creatures of an ignobler nature, *Vade ad formicam, Go to the ant*, do as she doth, be as industrious in thy business, as she is in hers. And then, as in inclining us to good, so also for avoiding of sinful courses, he leads us by example too, *Non sicut quidam eorum, Be not idolators as some of them, nor fornicators, nor tempters of Christ, nor murmurers, as some of them*[4]. And as that apostle begins that catalogue there, so, *These are examples to us*, so he ends it thus also, *These things came unto them for examples:* God suffers the wicked to proceed in their sin, and he pours down his judgments upon them for their sins, not only for their punishment, but therefore, that they might be examples to us. Now if God raise a glory to himself in the destruction of the wicked, if he make the wicked in their ruin, even ministers in his church, that is, edifiers, and instructors of others, by their own ruin, if their ruin be a sensible catechism, and a visible sermon for the edifying of others, how much more doth it conduce to his glory, that the righteousness, and holy conversation of his ministers, and prophets should be a lantern to the feet of his people! This is all that David promises in thankfulness for that mercy which he asks of God, this is that that he asks; *Restore me to the joy of thy salvation*[5], *Et confirma me spiritu principali, Establish me with thy free Spirit, Spiritu munifico*, says St. Hierome, With thy liberal, thy bountiful Spirit; this is much that David asks; and what will David do for God? This; *I will teach thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.* And this is that which St. Paul apprehended to have moved God, to use his service in the church: *For this cause was I received to mercy, that Jesus Christ should first show unto me all long suffering*[6]; but that was not all; but as it follows there, *Unto the example of them, which shall in time to come believe in him unto eternal life.* It is an unexpressible comfort to have been God's instrument, for the conversion of others, by the power of preaching, or by a holy and exemplar life in any calling. And with this comfort David proceeds in the recommendation of this duty of prayer, *Day and*

[4] 1 Cor. x. [5] Psal. li. 12. [6] 1 Tim. i. 16.

*night I have felt thy hand upon me, I have acknowledged my sin unto thee, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin;* thus it stood with me, and by my example, *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found.*

First then, the person that hath any access allowed him, any title to pray, is he that is *godly*, holy. Now, *Omnis sanctus, est omnis baptismate sanctificatus*[7]: Those are the holy ones whom God will hear, who are of the household of the faithful, of the communion of saints, matriculated, engraffed, enrolled in the church, by that initiatory sacrament of baptism; for, for the house of God, into which we enter by baptism, is the house of prayer; and, as out of the ark, whosoever swam best, was not saved by his swimming, no more is any moral man, out of the church, by his praying: he that swum in the flood, swum but into more and more water; he that prays out of the church, prays but into more and more sin, because he doth not establish his prayer in that, Grant this for our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus' sake. It is true then, that these holy ones, whose prayer is acceptable, are those of the Christian church; only they; but is it all they? Are all their prayers acceptable? There is a second concoction necessary too: not only to have been sanctified by the church in baptism, but a sanctification in a worthy receiving of the other sacrament too; a life that pleads the first seal, baptism, and claims the other seal, the body and blood of Christ Jesus: we know the wise man's counsel, concerning propitiation, Be not without fear[8]. Though thou have received the propitiatory sacrament of baptism, be afraid that thou hast not all. Will the milk that thou suckedst from a wholesome nurse, keep thee alive now? Or canst thou dine upon last year's meat to-day? He that hath that first holiness, the holiness of the covenant, the holiness of baptism, let him pray for more. For *Omnis sanctus*, is *Quantumcumque sanctus*, How holy soever he be, that holiness will not defray him all the way, but that holiness is a fair letter of credit, and a bill of exchange for more. When canst thou think thyself holy enough? when thou hast *washed* thyself in *snow-water?* in penitent tears? (as the best purity of this life is expressed) why, even then, *Abominabuntur te vestimenta tua, Thine own clothes shall*

[7] Hierome. [8] Ecclus. v. 5.

*make thee abominable*[9]. Is all well, when thou thinkest all well? why, *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirit*[10]. If thine own spirit, thine own conscience accuse thee of nothing, nothing unrepented, is all well? why, *I know nothing by myself, yet am I not thereby justified*[11]. It is God only that is surveyor of thy holiness, and, *Behold, he found no stedfastness in his servants, and laid folly upon his angels; how much more in them, that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust*[12]? *Sordet in conspectu æterni Judicis*[13], When that eternal Judge comes to value our transitory, or imaginary, our hollow, and rusty, and rotten holiness, *Sordet quod in intentione fulget operantis*, Even that which had a good lustre, a good speciousness, not only in the eyes of men that saw it, who might be deceived by my hypocrisy, but in the purpose of him that did it, becomes base, more alloy than pure metal, more corruption than devotion.

Though Jacob, when he fled from his father-in-law, Laban, were free enough himself, from the theft of Laban's idols, yet it was dangerously pronounced of him, *With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live*[14]: for, his own wife, Rachel had stolen them: and *Caro conjux*[15]; Thy wife, thy flesh, thy weaker part, may insinuate much sin into thine actions, even when thy spirit is at strongest, and thou in thy best confidence. Only thus these two cases may differ; Rachel was able to cover those stolen idols from her father's finding, with that excuse, *The custom of women is come upon me;* but thou shalt not be able to cover thy stolen sins, with saying, The infirmity of man is come upon me, I do but as other men do; though thou have that degree towards sanctification, that thou sin not out of presumption, but out of infirmity, though thou mayest in a modified sense fall within David's word, *Omnis sanctus*, A holy man, yet every holy and godly man must pray, That even those infirmities may be removed too. *Qui*

[9] Job. ix. 30. [10] Prov. xvi. 2.

[11] 1 Cor. iv. 4. It is impossible to avoid remarking here, that our translation, *I know nothing by myself*, conveyed, at the time of its being made, the sense of οὐδὲν σύνοιδα ἐμαυτῷ, and in this sense Donne here quotes it. We have in a former sermon, "The sins which I know by thee."—ED.

[12] Job iv. 18. [13] Gregory. [14] Gen. xxxi. 31.

[15] Augustine.

*sanctificatur, sanctificetur adhuc: He that is holy, let him be holy still*[16]; not only so holy still, but still more and more holy. For, beloved, as in the firmament, of those stars which are reduced into constellations, and into a certainty of shapes, of figures, and images, we observe some to be of one greatness, some of another, we observe divers magnitudes in all them, but to all those other stars, which are not reduced into those forms, and figures, we allow no magnitude at all, no proportion at all, no name, no consideration: so for those blessed souls which are collected into their eternal dwelling in heaven, which have their immoveable possession, position at the right hand of God, as one star differs from another in glory, so do these saints which are in heaven; but whilst men are upon this earth, though they be stars, (saints of God) though they be in the firmament, established in the true church of God, yet they have no magnitude, no proportion, no certainty, no holiness in themselves, nor in anything formerly done by God in their behalf, and declared to us; but their present degrees of godliness give them but that qualification, that they may pray acceptably for more; he must be so godly before he pray, and his prayer must be for more godliness; and all directed to the right object of prayer, to God, *Unto thee shall every one that is godly pray*, which is our next, the second of our four considerations in this first part.

*Ad te*, to God, because he can hear; and then *ad te*, to God, because he can give. Certainly it were a strange distemper, a strange singularity, a strange circularity, in a man that dwelt at Windsor, to fetch all his water at London-bridge: so is it in him, that lives in God's presence, (as he does, that lives religiously in his church) to go for all his necessities, by invocation to saints. David was willing to be our example for prayer, but he gives no example of scattering our prayers upon any other than God. Christ Jesus was willing to give us a rule for prayer: but if he had intended that his rule should have been deflected and declined to saints, he would have taught us to say, *Frater noster qui es in cœlis*, and not only *Pater noster;* to pray to our brethren which are there too, and not only to our Father which is in heaven. If any man have tasted at court, what it is to be ever

[16] Rev. xxii. 11.

welcome to the king himself, and what it is to speak to another to speak for him, he will bless that happiness, of having an immediate access to God himself in his prayers. They that come so low down the stream, as we said before, to London-bridge, they will go lower, and lower, to Gravesend too; they that come to saints, they will come to the images, and relics of saints too; they come to a brackish water, between salt and fresh, and they come at last, to be swallowed up in that sea which hath no limit, no bottom, that is, to direct all their devotions to such saints, as have no certainty, not only not in their ability, we know not what those saints can do, but not in their history, we know not that such as they pray to, are saints; nay, we know not whether they ever were at all. So that this may be idolatry, in the strictest acceptation of the word, idol; *idolum nihil est;* let that be true, which they say, and in their sense, our images are not idols, for an idol is nothing, represents nothing, but our images are the images of men that once were upon the earth. But that is not throughout true; for they worship images of those who never were; Christophers, and other symbolical, and emblematical saints, which never lived here, but were, and are yet nothing. But let them be true saints, how will they make it appear to us, that those saints can hear us? What surety can we have of it? Let us rather pray to him, who we are sure can hear, that is first, and then sure he can give that we pray for, that is next.

The prayer here, is forgiveness of sins; and can saints give that? The hosannas, and the hallelujahs, and the *Gloria in excelsis, Glory in heaven, peace upon earth, good will amongst men*, these are good and cheerful notes, in which the choir of heaven are exercised; cherubims and seraphims, prophets and apostles, saints and angels, bless God and benefit men by these: but the *Remittuntur peccata, Thy sins are forgiven thee*, is too high a note for any creature in earth or heaven, to reach to, except where it is set by God's own hand, as it is by his commission to his minister, in his church, and there only, in the absolution given by his ordinance to every penitent sinner. We see that phrase, *Dimittuntur peccata, Thy sins are forgiven thee*, was a suspicious word, even in the mouth of Christ himself, amongst the Scribes that would not believe his divinity, when Christ said to him

that had the palsy, *My son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee:* the Scribes cried out, *He blasphemed:* it strikes any man to hear of forgiveness of sins, from any but God. It was not a harder thing to say, *Fiat lux*, than to say, *Dimittuntur peccata:* not harder to bring light out of darkness by creation, than to *bring a clean thing out of uncleanness*[17] by conversion; for, who can do that? And therefore when the king of Aram sent Naaman to the king of Israel, to take order for the curing of his bodily leprosy, the king of Israel rent his clothes, and said, *Am I a god, to kill and to give life*[18]? The power even of temporal life and death, is proper to God; for, as witches think sometimes that they kill, when they do not, and are therefore as culpable, as if they did; so a tyrannous persecutor, so a passionate judge, so a perjured witness, so a revengeful quarreller, thinks he takes away the life of his enemy, and is guilty of that murder in the eye of God, though the blow be truly from God, whose judgments are ever just, though not ever declared. Let them never say, that they ask not these things, temporal or spiritual, at the hands of those saints; for, expressly, literally, as the words stand, and sound, they do ask even those very things; and if the church have any other meaning in those prayers, the mischief is, that they never teach the people, by preaching, what that their reserved meaning is, but leave them to the very letter of the prayer, to ask those things, which, if they could hear, yet the saints could not give. And when the prayer is made aright, directed to God himself, yet here in our text it is limited, *Propter hoc, For this*, this that was spoken of before, *every one that is godly shall pray unto thee.* Now what is this *this?* for that is our third consideration.

*Si a quo petenda, sed non quæ petenda petis*[19], If thou come to the right market, but buy unwholesome herbs there, if thou come to the apothecary's shop, and ask for nothing but poisons, if thou come to God in thy prayer, and ask only temporal blessings, which are blessings only in their use, and may be, and are ordinarily snares and encumbrances, then is this direction of David's *Propter hoc, For this shall he pray*, transgressed. For, *This*, as

[17] Job xiv. [18] 2 Kings v. 7. [19] Augustine.

appears in the words immediately before the text, is, *The forgiveness of the punishment, and of the iniquity of our sin;* which is so inexpressible a comfort, to that soul that hath wrestled with the indignation of God, and is now refreshed and released, as whosoever should go about to describe it, should diminish it; he hath it not that thinks he can utter it. It is a blessed comfort to find my soul in that state, as when I last received the sacrament with a good conscience: if I enjoy that peace now, that is, the peace of a religious, and of a wise conscience; for there is a wisdom of the conscience, not to run into infinite scruples and doubts, but *imponere finem litibus*, to levy a fine in bar of all scruples, and diffidences, and to rest in the peace and assuredness of remission of sins, after due means for the obtaining thereof; and therefore if I be as well now, as when I received this is a blessed degree of blessedness. But yet there is one cloud in this case, *ab occultis*, my secret sins, which even mine own narrowest inquisition extends not to. If I consider myself to be as well as I was at my baptism, when I brought no actual sin, and had the hand of Christ to wash away the foulness of original sin, can I pray for a better state than that? Even in that there was a cloud too, and a cloud that hath thunder and lightning in it, that *fomes peccati*, that fuel and those embers of sin, that are but raked up, and not trod out, and do break forth upon every temptation that is presented, and if they be not effectually opposed, shall aggravate my condemnation, more than if I had never been baptized. But David conceives such a forgiveness here, as carries up the soul to the contemplation of that state, which it had before the fall of Adam. It is not this present sin of a cold delivering, and a drowsy hearing of the messages of God; it is not my yesterday's sin, nor my sins since my last repentance, that are forgiven me, but my sin committed six thousand years before I was born, my sin in Adam, before any promise, nay, before any apprehension of any need of a Messiah; I am so restored, that now by the application of the merits of my Redeemer, I am as well as I should have been, though there had never been any use of a Redeemer, no occasion given by me in Adam, of the incarnation and passion of Christ Jesus. The comfort of being presented to God as innocent as Adam, then when God breathed a

soul into him, yea as innocent as Christ Jesus himself, when he breathed out his soul to God; oh how blessed is that soul that enjoys it, and how bold that tongue that goes about to express it! This is the blessedness which the godly attain to by prayer, but not by every sudden *Lord, Lord*, or every occasional holy interjection, but by serious prayer, invested, as with the former, so with that other circumstance that remains, *In tempore opportuno, In a time when thou mayest be found.*

This time is not those *horæ stativæ, hora canonicæ*, those fixed hours in the Roman church, where men are bound to certain prayers at certain hours. Not that it is inconvenient for men to bind themselves to certain fixed times of prayer in their private exercises; and though not by such a vow, as that it shall be an impiety, yet by so solemn a purpose, as that it shall be a levity to break it. I have known the greatest Christian prince, (in style and title) even at the audience of an ambassador, at the sound of a bell, kneel down in our presence and pray; and God forbid, he should be blamed for doing so; but to place a merit in observing those times, as they do, is not a right understanding of this time of finding. Nor is it those transitory and interlocutory prayers, which out of custom and fashion we make, and still proceed in our sin; when we pretend to speak to God, but like comedians upon a stage, turn over our shoulder, and whisper to the devil. *When you stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes; when you make many prayers, I will not hear; for your hands are full of blood*[20]. And if they be full of blood, they can take it no more; if they be full of the blood of oppression, they can lay no hold upon the blood of propitiation. *Irrisor est, non pœnitens, qui adhuc agit quod pœnitet*[21], He mocks God, that repents and sins over those sins every night, that every day he repents. The apostle says so too, *He makes a mock of the Son of God, and crucifies him again.* This only is true repentance, *Plangere et plangenda non committere*[22], To bewail our sins, and forbear the sins we have bewailed. Neither alone will serve; which deludes many. Many think they do enough if they repent, and yet proceed in their sin; and many think they do enough, if they forbear their

[20] Isaiah i. 15. [21] Isidore. [22] Ambrose.

sin now, though they never repent that which is past; both are illusory, both deceitful distempers. *Lacessit judicem, qui post-posita satisfactione quærit præmiis honorari*[23], He doth but provoke and exasperate the Judge, that solicits him for heaven, before he hath appeased his anger by repentance for former sins; for this is to call for costs bofore he be discharged.

These then are not the times of finding God; but what are? Generally it is *Manifestatio evangelii*[24], The time of the gospel is the time of finding God; now when God hath vouchsafed *induere hominem*, to put on us in his incarnation, and enabled us *induere Deum*, to put on him in the Sacraments; to stay with us here upon earth, and to carry us up with him in his ascension to heaven; when he is made one body with us, and hath made us one spirit with him, how can we doubt of a fit time to find him? Christ's time was always; for even under the law, God says, *I have heard thee in an accepted time, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee*[25]; but this doth the Holy Ghost apply to the time of the gospel, *Behold now the accepted time, behold now the day of salvation*[26].

The time then of the gospel is the time of finding; but now, all times are not alike, calamities are a good time. *When I found trouble, and sorrow, then I called upon the name of the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, deliver my soul*[27]. This is a good time, but it is somewhat a dark time; the withdrawing of God's countenance from us; the Egyptians when they deprehended their danger, said, *We will fly from the face of Israel*[28]; but whither? *The sea returned, and the Egyptians fled against it, and perished.* We may be benighted, benumbed by calamities, and they may as well deject us as raise us. Joab pursued Abner hotly, vehemently; Abner asks, what, *Usque ad internecionem, Shall the sword devour for ever*[29]? Joab answered, (as the Vulgate reads those words) *Vivit Dominus, si locutus fuisses mane, As the Lord liveth, if thou hadst spoken in the morning, in the morning every man had departed.* If we turn to the Lord in the morning, in the beginning of an affliction, the Lord turns his fierce wrath from us; but if we stand out long, and bend not

[23] Augustine. [24] Augustine. [25] Isaiah xLix. 8. [26] 2 Cor. vi. 2.
[27] Psal. cxvi. 4. [28] Exod. xiv. 25. [29] 2 Sam. ii. 26.

under his corrections, he pursues *ad internecionem*, even to destruction by obduration.

So then the manifestation of the gospel, that is, the helps which God offers us, more than Jews, or Gentiles, in the ministry of the gospel, and the ordinances of his church, is the time of finding God; and woe unto us, if we seek him not whilst he affords us these helps; and then the time of affliction, when God threatens to hide his face, but hath not yet hidden it, but awakens us by a calamity, is a time of finding God. But the best and the clearest time is in the sunshine, then when he appears to us in the warm and cheerful splendour of temporal blessings upon us; then when thou hast a good estate, and good children to let it descend upon; then when thou hast good health, and a good profession to exercise thy strength, and thy labours in; then when the dishes upon thy table are doubled, and thy cup overflows, and the hungry and thirsty souls of the poor do not only feed upon the crumbs under thy table, and lick up the overflowings of thy cup, but divide dishes with thee, and enter into the midst of thy bowls; then when thou hast temporal blessings, (that is God's silver) and his grace to use those blessings well, (that is God's gold) then is the best time of finding the Lord, for then he looks upon thee in the sunshine, and then thy thankful acknowledgment of former blessings is the most effectual prayer thou canst make, for the continuance, and enlargement of them.

In a word, then is a fit time of finding God, whensoever thy conscience tells thee he calls to thee; for a rectified conscience is the word of God; if that speak to thee now this minute, now is thy time of finding God. That *now*, that I named then, that minute is past; but God affords thee another *now;* he speaks again, he speaks still, and if thy conscience tell thee that he speaks to thee, now is that time. This word of God, thy conscience will present unto thee, but that one condition, which Moses presented to God's people, and that is, *that thou seek the Lord with all thy heart, and all thy soul*[30]. It is a kind of denying the infiniteness of God, to serve him by pieces, and rags; God is not infinite to me, if I think a discontinued service will serve him. It is a kind of denying the unity of God, to join

[30] Deut. iv. 29.

other gods, pleasure, or profit with him; he is not one God to me, if I join other associates, and assistants to him, saints, or angels. It is a kind of diffidence in Christ, as though I were not sure that he would stand in the favour of God still, as though I were afraid that there might rise a new favourite in heaven, to whom it might concern me to apply myself, if I make the balance so even, as to serve God and Mammon; if I make a complimental visit of God at his house upon Sunday, and then plot with the other faction, the world, the flesh, and the devil, all the week after. The Lord promised a power of seeking, and an infallibility of finding; but still with this total condition, *Ye shall seek me, and ye shall find me, because ye shall seek me with all your heart*[31]. This he promised for the future, that he would do; this he testified for the house of Judah, that he had done, *Judah sought him with a whole desire, and he was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about*[32]: and the Lord shall give you rest round about; rest in your bodies, and rest in your estates; rest in your good name with others, and rest in your consciences in yourselves; rest in your getting, and rest in your enjoying that you have got, if you seek him with a whole heart; and to seek him with a whole heart, is not by honest industry to seek nothing else (for God wears good clothes, silk, and soft raiment, in his religious servants in courts, as well as camel's hair, in John Baptist in the wilderness; and God manifests himself to man, as well in the splendour of princes in courts, as in the austerity of John Baptist in the wilderness) but to seek God with the whole heart, is to seek nothing with that primary, and radical, and fundamental affection, as God; to seek nothing for itself, but God: not to seek worldly things in excess, because I hope, if I had them, I should glorify God in them; but first to find established in myself a zealous desire to glorify God, and then a modest desire of means to be able to do it. And *for this, every one that is holy shall pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found.*

And so we have done with our first part, and the four pieces that constitute that, the person, *omnis sanctus*, every godly man; that is, *sanctificatus*, and *sanctificandus*, he that is godly enough

[31] Jer. xxix. 13. [32] 2 Chron. xv. 15.

to pray, and prays that he may be more godly: and the object of prayer, *ad te*, God alone, for God alone can hear, and God alone can give; and then the subject of prayer, *hoc*, *this*, this which David expresses, forgiveness of the punishment, and of the iniquity of sin, in which respect, (that David proposes and specificates the subject of prayer) we are fairly directed rather to accustom ourselves to those prayers, which are recommended to us by the church, than to extemporal prayers of others, or of our own effusion; and lastly, the time of finding God, that is, then when we seek him with a whole heart, seek him as principal, and then receive temporal things, as accessory, and conducible to his glory. Thus much hath fallen into the first part, the duty of prayer; a little remains to be said of the benefit here assured, *Surely, in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.*

Taking these *waters*, either distributively, to every one that is godly, or collectively, as St. Hierome does to the whole church, the use will be all one. The Holy Ghost who is a direct worker upon the soul and conscience of man, but a metaphorical, and figurative expresser of himself, to the reason, and understanding of man, abounds in no metaphor more, than in calling tribulations, *waters:* particularly, *he would bring in waters upon Tyrus*[33], and, *he would pour out his wrath upon his enemies, like waters*[34]. Neither doth he only intimate temporal, but spiritual afflictions too, in the name of *waters*. And as St. Hierome understands this whole place of the church, collectively, so St. Augustine understands these *waters*, to be *variæ doctrinæ*, those diverse opinions, that disquiet and trouble the church. And though the church of God were built upon a hill, and compassed, and environed, and fenced with the blood of him that built it, and defended and guarded by the vigilancy of the apostles; yet into this Jerusalem did these waters break, even in the apostle's time, as we see by those several, those manifold, those contradictory heresies, that sprung up then. Christ and his apostles had carried two waters about his church: the water of baptism, that is *limen ecclesiæ*, and *janua sacramentorum*[35], the first ferry, by which we

[33] Ezek. xxvi. 3. [34] Hosea v. [35] Augustine.

pass into the church; and by this water came three thousand, and five thousand at once to the church, upon particular sermons of St. Peter. And then Christ gave another water, by which, they came to another absolution from actual sins, the water of contrite tears, and repentance, which he had promised before, *I will pour clean water upon you, and you shall be clean*[36]. And by this water came Peter himself, when his faith had failed, and by this water came Mary Magdalen, when her life had been defiled. But yet for all these waters, other waters soaked in, and corrupted them early; for, for baptism, the disciples of Simon Magus annulled Christ's baptism, and baptized in Simon's name; and his disciple Menander annulled the baptism of Christ, and Simon, and baptized in his own name. And then, for the other water, repentance, the heretics drained up that shrewdly, when they took away all benefit of repentance for sins committed after baptism. David denies not, nay David assures us, that collectively, the whole church shall be beaten upon with waters.

Waters multiplied; *Aquæ multæ, Many waters;* so the Vulgate reads this, that we translate here, *great waters.* So multiplied heresies. The excellency of the Christian religion is, that it is *verbum abbreviatum*, a contracted religion; all the *credenda*, all that is to be believed, reduced to twelve articles of the creed; all the *speranda*, all that is to be hoped for, prayed for, expressed in seven petitions, in the Lord's Prayer; all the *agenda*, all that is to be done in it, comprised in ten commandments, in the decalogue. And then our blessed Saviour, though he would take away none of the burden (for it is an *easy yoke*, and a *light burden*) yet he was pleased to bind it in a less room, and a more portable form, when he re-abridged that abridgment, and recontracts this contracted doctrine, in those two, *Love God*, and *love thy neighbour.* And then the devil hath opposed this abridgment by multiplication, by many waters, many heresies: for, it is easy to observe, that in every article of the creed, there have been at least a dozen heresies. And in those articles, which were most credible, most evident, most sensible, most all of; many more heresies upon the humanity of Christ, than about his divinity; and then, as in matters of faith, so for matter of manners, there

[36] Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

was scarce anything so foul and so obscene, which was not taught by some heretics, to be religious and necessary; things which cannot be excused, things which may not be named, made by the gnostics, essential and necessary in the consecration of the sacrament. And then, when these waters of death were in a good part dried up, these gross errors in faith and manners were reasonably well overcome, then came in those waters of traditional doctrines in the Roman church, which are so many, as that they overflow even the water of life, the Scriptures themselves, and suppress, and surround them.

Therefore does David, in this text, call these many waters, *diluvium, a flood of great waters;* many and violent. For this word *shatach, inundans,* signifies vehemence, eagerness, and is elegantly applied to the fierceness of a horse in battle, *Equus inundans in bellum*[37], A horse that overflows the battle, that rushes into the battle. Therefore speaks the prophet *of waters full of blood*[38]; what seas of blood did the old persecutions, what seas have later times poured out, when in the Roman church, their own authors will boast of sixty thousand slain in a day, of them that attempted a reformation in the times of the Waldenses!

Surely, says our prophet, these waters shall be, heresies there shall be. And no man may look for such a church, as shall have no water; evermore there will be some things raw, and unconcocted in every church; evermore some waters of trouble and dissension, and a man is not to forsake a church, in which he hath received his baptism, for that. But waiving this general, and collective application of these waters to the church, and to take it as the letter of the text invites us, *omnis sanctus,* surely every godly man shall find these waters, many waters, floods of many waters; for affliction is our daily bread; for we cannot live in this world a spiritual life, without some kind of affliction: for, as with long fasting we lose our stomachs, so by being long unexercised in tribulation, we come to lose our patience, and to a murmuring when it falls upon us. For that last petition of the Lord's Prayer, *Libera nos à malo, Deliver us from evil,* may, as some interpret it, suppose that this evil, that is *malum pœnæ,*

[37] Jer. viii. 6. [38] Isaiah xv. 9.

affliction, will certainly fall upon us; and then we do not so much pray to be delivered from it, as to be delivered in it, not that afflictions may not come, but that they may not overcome, when they come, that they may not be ineffectual upon us. For, it was *durus sermo*, a harder and an angrier speech than it seems, when God said to his people, *Why should he be smitten any more*[39]? Why should I keep you at school any longer? Why should I prepare physic, or study your recovery by corrections any further? When God was wearied with their afflictions, and they were not, this was a heavy case; he afflicted them forty years together in the wilderness, and yet he says, *Forty years long was I grieved with this generation:* he never says, they were grieved, but he was with their stupidity; they murmured, but they sorrowed not to any amendment. So they perverted this word, *Non approximabunt, They shall not come nigh thee*, they shall not affect thee; that they must do; we must be sensible of God's corrections; but yet there is a good sense, and a plentiful comfort, in this word of our text. To the godly man, *non approximabunt, the floods of great waters*, though *waters*, though *floods*, though *great floods, they shall not come nigh him;* and that is our last word, and final conclusion.

Consider the church of God collectively, and the saints of God distributively, in which Babylon you will, in the Chaldean Babylon, or in the Italian Babylon, and these waters do come nigh us, touch, and touch to the quick, to the heart. But yet as David intends here, they touch not us, they come not nigh us; for *we have treasures in earthen vessels*[40]; they may touch the vessel, but not the treasure. And this is literally expressed in the text itself, *non approximabunt eum;* not that they shall not come near his house, or his lands, or his children, or his friends, or his body, but *non eum*, they shall not come nigh him. For, for the church, the peace of the church, the plenty of the church, the ceremonies of the church, they are *sua*, but not *illa*, they are hers, but they are not she. And these things, riches and ceremonies, they may be washed off with one tide, and cast on with another, discontinued in one age, and re-assumed in another, divested in one church, and divested in another, and yet the churches,

[39] Isaiah i. 5. [40] 2 Cor. iv. 7.

she in her fundamental doctrines never touched. And so for us, a wave may wash away as much as Job lost, and yet not come nigh us; for if a heathen could say, *Vix ea nostra voco*, That outward things were scarce worthy to be called ours, shall a Christian call them not only his, but himself, so as if they be lost, he is lost? How long will a medal, a piece of coin lie in the water, before the stamp be washed off? and yet how soon is the image of God, of his patience, his longanimity defaced in us by every billow, every affliction? But for the saints of God it shall not be so; surely it shall not. They shall stand against the waters, and *the sea shall see it, and fly, and Jordan shall be turned back*, and the world shall say, *What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest, O Jordan that thou turnedst back*[41]? For they that know not the power of the Almighty, though they envy, yet shall wonder, and stand amazed at the deliverance of the righteous. *Sto, et pulso*, says God of himself, *I stand at the door and knock*[42]; God will not break open doors to give thee a blessing, as well as he loves thee, and as well as he loves it, but will have thee open to him: much more will he keep temptations at the door; they shall not break in upon thee, except thou open. This then was that, which David elsewhere apprehended with fear, *The sorrows of the grave compassed me about, and the snares of death overtook me*[43], here they were near him, but no worse. This is that that he prays deliverance from, *Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up*[44]. And this is that God assures us all that are his, *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the floods that they do not overflow thee*[45]. Maintain therefore a holy patience in all God's visitations: accept your waters, though they come in tears; for he that sends them, Christ Jesus, had his flood, his inundation in blood; and whatsover thou sufferest from him, thou sufferest for him, and glorifiest him in that constancy. Upon those words, *Tres sunt, there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, and water, and blood*, St. Bernard taking water there, (by way of allusion) for affliction, saith, though the spirit were witness enough without water, or blood, yet *vix aut nunquam inveniri arbitror Spiritum sine aqua*,

[41] Psalm cxiv. 3. [42] Rev. iii. 20. [43] Psalm xviii. 5.
[44] Psalm lxix. 15. [45] Isaiah xliii. 2.

*et sanguine*, we lack one of the seals of the spirit, if we lack God's corrections. We consider three waters in our blessed Saviour; he wept over Jerusalem; do thou so over thy sinful soul. He sweat in the garden; do thou so too, in eating thy bread in the sweat of thy brows, in labouring sincerely in thy calling. And then he sent water and blood out of his side, being dead, which was, *fons utriusque sacramenti*[46], the spring-head of both Sacraments; do thou also refresh in thy soul, the dignity which thou receivedst in the first sacrament of baptism, and thereby come worthily to the participation of the second, and therein the Holy Ghost shall give thee, the seal of that security, which he tenders to thee in this text, *Non approximabunt*, How great *water-floods* soever come, *they shall not come nigh thee*, not nigh that, which is thou, that is, thy faith, thy soul, and though it may swallow that, by which thou art a man, thy life, it shall not shake that, by which thou art a Christian, thy religion. Amen.

[46] Augustine.

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